

Greenfields

IRRIGATION DISTRICT



On Thursday, January 16th, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. the Greenfields Irrigation District (GID) held its Monthly Board meeting. The following are the minutes taken from that meeting. Those in attendance were: Board President Tim Brunner, Vice President Bill Norris, Commissioners Chase Brady, Dave Gulick and Pat Brosten. District Manager Erling Juel and Board Secretary Jenny Gulick were also present. Also, in attendance were: GID employees Eric Mayer, Cory Copenhaver, Steve Lettengarver and Chaz Keller. Chris Ostberg and Michael Konen, Advisory Board Members and SRWG Coordinator, Tracy Wendt were also present; along with water users Spencer Pearson, Ryan McInerney, Tony Clark, Ben Freeman and Bill Pearson.

The meeting was called to order by President Brunner at 6:00 P.M. President Brunner reminded the group that public comment would be accepted but held to a maximum of 5 minutes per individual.

Approve Meeting Minutes and Monthly Warrants: The first item of business was to approve the minutes from the December 11th Regular Meeting and the Union negotiations minutes. There were no discrepancies found in the Regular Minutes, or the Union negotiations and Commissioner Gulick made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Brosten seconded the motion. All in favor and the Minutes were approved. The Board then reviewed the December warrants list and Manager Juel gave a brief overview of the AFFCO and United Materials warrants and what they were for. Commissioner Brosten made a motion to approve the warrants and Commissioner Brady seconded. All were in favor and the warrants were approved.

Contacts to Execute: None.

Parties Presenting Issues: None.

The next item of business was the Manger's Report:

Reservoir and River Operations: See M.R. for full details. Reservoir and River Operations: Gibson Reservoir is 5% full currently, which is 25% of normal for this time of year. This is similar to last year at this time. Inflows are still very low due to cold temperatures. Willow Creek Reservoir is 41% full, which is 59% of normal for this time of year. Snowpack is currently 60% of normal, which is 100% more than what we had last year at this time. The National Climate Prediction Center is now predicting below normal temps and well-above normal precipitation for January through March. April to June is predicted to be normal temps and below normal precipitation. Diversion into WCFC was discontinued on December 12th.

Water Rights: No update.

GID Staff Updates: The GID Board reached an agreement with the Union membership on Wednesday the 11th before the regular GID Board meeting. GID Management posted an announcement for the Water Master position and there is some internal interest. Brad Hanson

gave his 2-week notice, so we will have to advertise for a Ditch Rider. Manager Juel needs to finish employee evaluations this month.

Office Improvements & General Administration: Several desk computers are needing to be replaced, but we will hold off a little longer.

GIS Mapping, Plats, Database & Certification Updates: Nothing new.

Farm Unit Operations: There are a few new pivot installations for the Board's review. There is a request from water user to split FU 788 and create a new FU 788.1, attached. This will be reviewed during the Agenda portion of the meeting.

Monthly Financials & 2024 Budget: See the M.R. for further details regarding accounts receivable and payable for December. We received a proposal from Douglas Wilson to perform the 2024 Annual Audit and special audit that is required this year. The Board will review and approve the proposal during the Agenda portion of the meeting. Manager Juel is working on finalizing the 2025 Budget for Board review and approval. The Union Contract is to be updated and received back soon to finalize payroll figures in the budget.

GID Vehicles & Heavy Equipment: O&M Foreman gave a brief overview of the mechanical issues with the Volvos. One needs a new transmission and since it is under warranty, it will be replaced and a replacement truck from Belgrade will be brought out for us to use until then. We are still looking to replace our lowboy transport trailer.

Spencer Pearson Human Rights Bureau Complaint: GID received notice that our current insurance provider has denied that they are responsible for providing legal counsel. GID filed a response to the Human Rights Bureau on January 14th.

Willow Creek Feeder Canal Maintenance & Lawsuit: See the M.R. for further details. The trial has been rescheduled from November 2024 to July or August 2025. There are still motions pending in District court.

Hydro Updates: General: See the M.R. for details. Manager Juel is reviewing the post-hearing response brief which is due January 24th. Arnold Coulee LOPP: The Utility Contractor will begin work again around April 1st. PPA: Negotiations with NWE and WAPA are still going slow, but some progress is happening. Construction: Site construction has stalled due to weather. We received the penstock transition sections and spools this week. Pishkun Inlet Hydro: Manager Juel will go to Helena next week to support the reauthorization of our \$1.5M low interest, DNRC-RRG loan since we have not used it in the last 2 years. Transmission Easements: Wetlands study has been completed. NEPA compliance should be completed by June. Nothing new on the other hydro sites.

GID Infrastructure Projects: For Current and Planned, see the M.R. Mary Taylor Facility: Nothing new to report. Willow Creek Spillway Repair: We are done hauling the riprap. Sun River Bridge Replacement: The \$3.3 Million shortfall of the base bid was covered by the FHWA. A pre-construction meeting will take place in mid-March. BOR and FHWA are still working on getting the historical designation removed so the old bridge can be demolished. This is not part of the base bid. Tunnel #3: WWC is performing an inspection and is on track.

Side walls have begun being erected. The contractor is slightly behind schedule. Final Phase of J-Wasteway: Manager Juel will go to Helena on Friday to speak on behalf of the project and provide support. Pishkun Outlet: Our funding application for \$19,054,209 was awarded by BOR. There will be a design charette and it is scheduled for the week of April 7th. The Project Management Plan has been finalized.

Title Transfer: Nothing new to report, but BOR is encouraging GID to assume ownership of everything downstream of the Diversion Dam. There is no real advantage to pursuing it currently, so we will probably hold off.

GID Grazing Lease Program: GID Range Rider Wilson was not present.

FCA Efforts to Modernize GID Infrastructure: We are submitting another grant application to DNRC to enhance some existing SCADA/canal measurement locations and create more. This will support overall flow monitoring and control. Nothing new on the Greenfields Bench Groundwater Study selected by the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. We are developing a scope of work and schedule for the System Improvement Plan (SIP) which will advance several efforts.

Miscellaneous: Manager Juel attended a status meeting with BOR in Billings on December 16th and 17th to discuss GID's long range plans and was concerned about several issues, such as our lack of reserves and the lack of progress made on their suggestions for improvement on the Reservoir and Dam sites. MWRA Conference in Helena on February 11th and 12th, so we will need to reschedule February's Board Meeting. We will have it on Thursday, February 13th at 8 A.M.

Short and Long-Term To-Do Lists: See the M.R. for details. Commissioner Brosten asked if we plan on hiring out the setting of the turbines at Arnold Coulee and Manager Juel explained that he and Eric were analyzing the details and will be deciding that shortly.

Agenda:

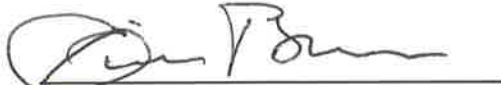
1. Board to review Proposal from Douglas Wilson to perform the 2023-2024 Annual Audit, handout provided. Manager Juel gave a brief overview and explained that it would be \$18,200-\$21,200 total with the single audit included. Commissioner Brosten moved to accept the proposal and Vice President Norris seconded. All in favor and the motion carried.
2. Board to review the request to close drain on FU 272 by landowner, Allen Beck, attached. The Board wants to do a little more research and will table this item until next month's meeting.
3. Board to review and approve the request from water user, Robert Camphouse, to split FU 788 and create a new FU 788.1, attached. Commissioner Brady moved to approve the request and Vice President Norris seconded. All in favor and the motion carried.
4. Board to review new pivot installation FYIs.

Public Comment: Tracy with SRWG gave a brief update, handout provided. She informed the Board that Madison Colyer had been hired full-time as the Watershed Outreach Program Coordinator. She will hopefully be at next month's meeting to meet everyone. She is working

with MSU Water Quality regarding the February 28th seminar on seepage and salinity studies. She has flyers to promote attendance. Manager Juel will be stepping down as Board President, so there will be an election. February 15th is the Annual Winterfest Fundraiser.

The Audit Proposal for th2 2023-2024 fiscal year from Douglas Wilson was then briefly discussed. Commissioner Brosten moved to approve the report with Commissioner Brady seconding the motion. All were in favor and the report was approved.

Commissioner Brosten moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Brady seconded. All in favor and the meeting is adjourned at 7:10 P.M.



Board President



Board Secretary

Board Action Recap:

- Board approved the proposal from Douglas Wilson for the 2023-24 Audit
- Board tabled the drain closure request from Allen Beck
- Board approved the request to split FU 788 and create a new FU, Camhouse



AGENDA FOR: Regular Board Meeting on Thursday, January 16th at 6 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order by Board President, Tim Brunner.

Public Comment: Prior to each agenda item...limited to 5 minutes...any Board action necessary will be addressed at the next regular meeting.

APPROVE MINUTES: December 11th Regular Meeting Minutes and Union Negotiations Minutes

REVIEW AND APPROVE BILLS FOR PAYMENT—Approve December warrants and recap list.

PARTIES PRESENTING:

CONTRACTS TO EXECUTE: None

MANAGER's REPORT

AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1) Board to review Proposal from Douglas Wilson for the 2023-2024 Annual Audit
- 2) Board to review request to close drain on FU 272 by landowner, Allen Beck- attached.
- 3) Board to review and approve request from water user, Robert Camphouse, to split FU 788 and create a new FU 788.1- attached.
- 4) Board pivot FYIs

PUBLIC COMMENT

- SRWG, Tracy Wendt to give the Board a brief update.

To: GID Commissioners
Jenny Gulick, GID Board Secretary

From: Erling A. Juel, P.E., District Manager

Subject: Manager's Report 01/16/25

1) RESERVOIR & RIVER OPERATIONS AND PROJECTIONS AS OF 01/15/25

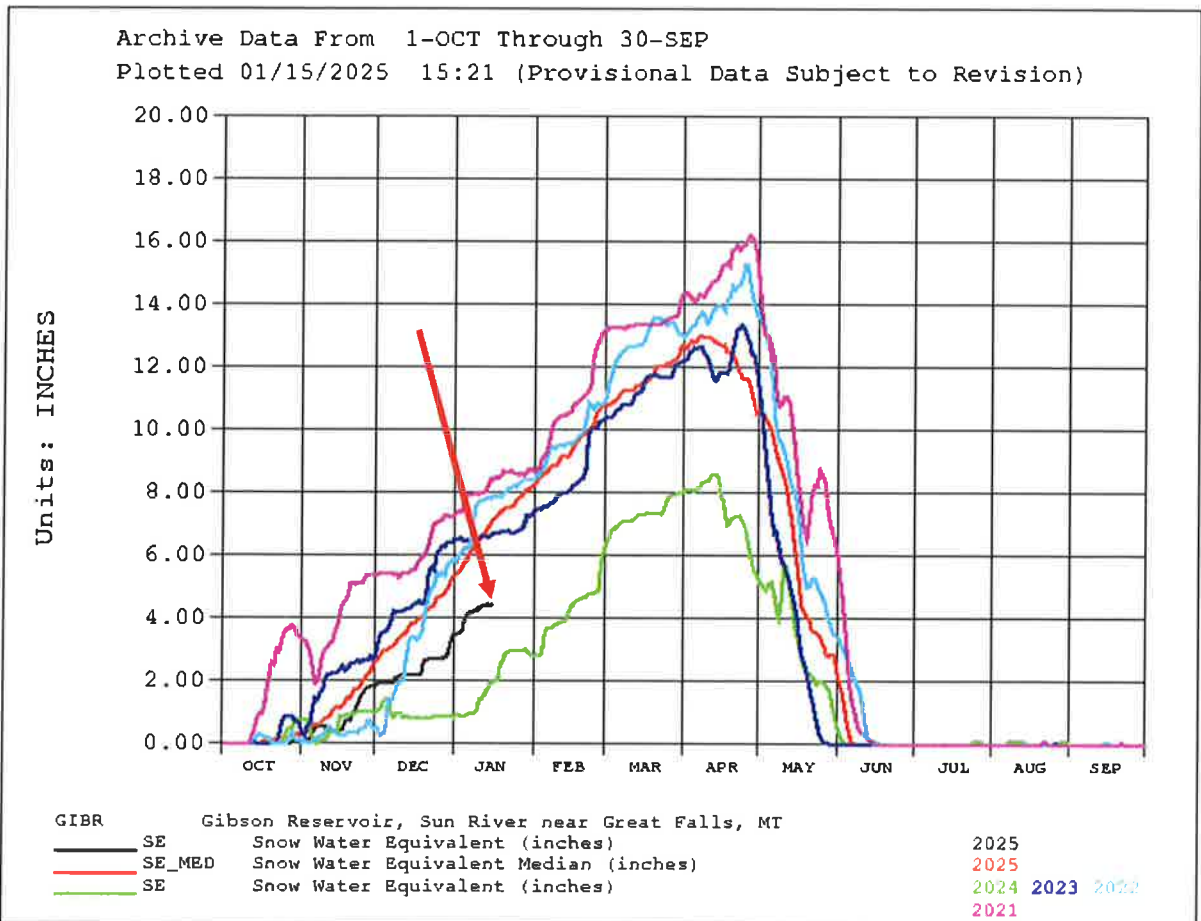
A. Reservoir operations and levels over the last 5 days were:

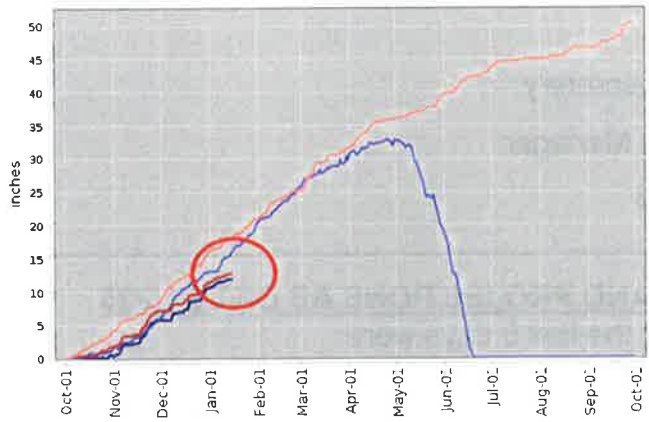
- Gibson Res: 5,375 Ac-ft, 5.4% Full & 23.4% of Normal,
- Gibson Inflows: varying from 95 to 110 cfs, 65% to 75% of Normal,
- Gibson Outflows: +/-100 cfs,
- Willow Creek Reservoir: 13,135 Ac-ft, 41% Full, 59% of Normal
- Willow Creek Inflows: <10 cfs

B. Snowpack Levels readings are:

- Badger Pass Snow-Water Eq. = 11.9"
- Mount Lockhart Snow-Water Eq. = 7.4"
- Waldron Snow-Water Eq. = 3.5"
- Wood Creek Snow-Water Eq. = 2.5"
- Gibson Reservoir Watershed = 4.4", 62% of normal per (USBR)

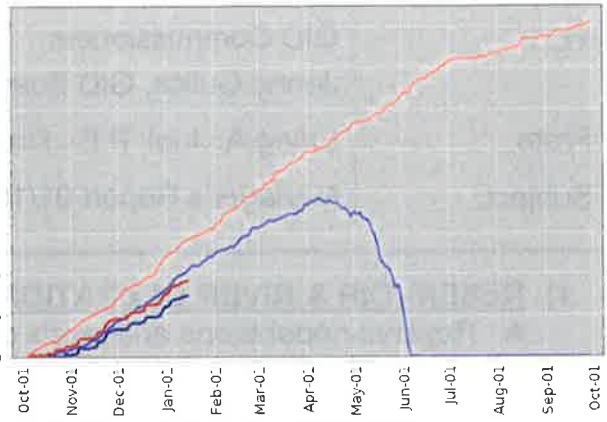
C. The National Climate Prediction Center is now predicting below normal temps and well-above normal precipitation for January through March. April to June is predicted to be normal temps and below normal precipitation.



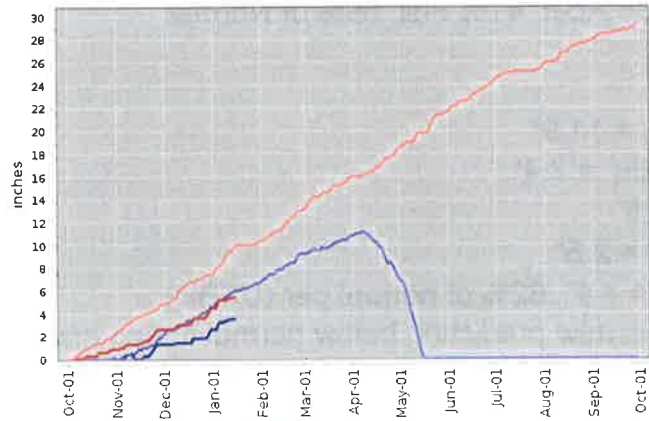


BADGER PASS

(snow-water equivalent)

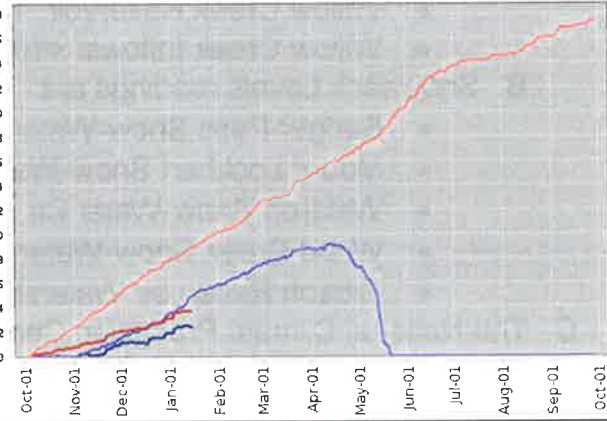


MOUNT LOCKHART

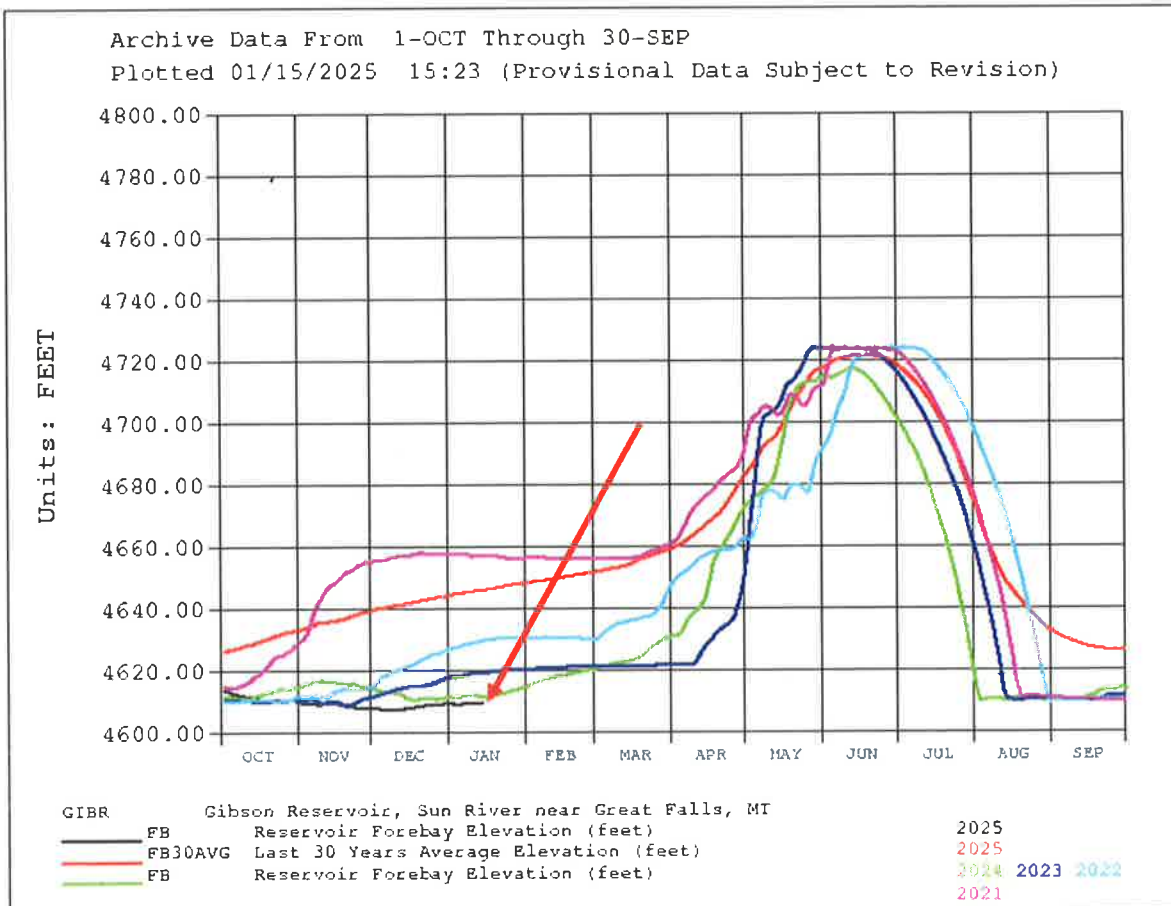


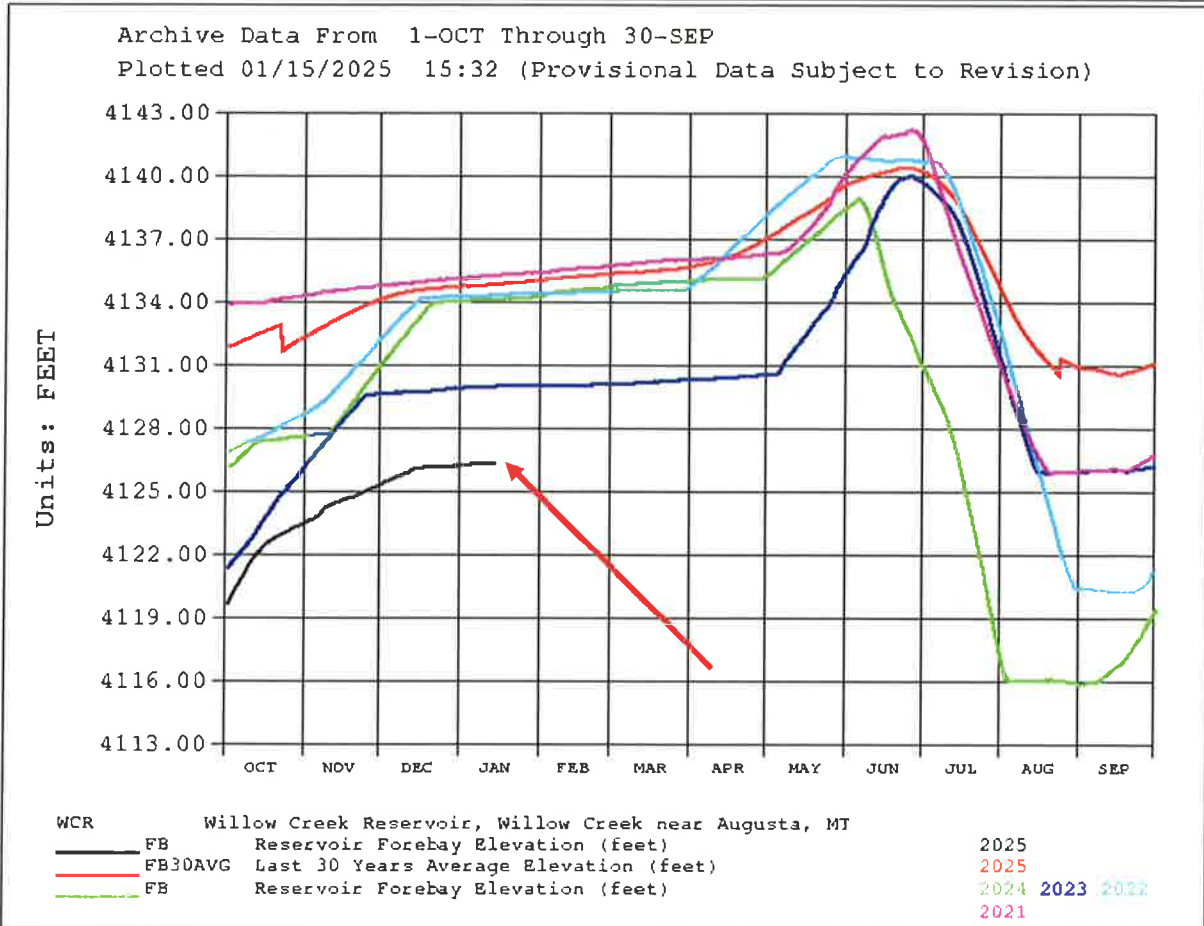
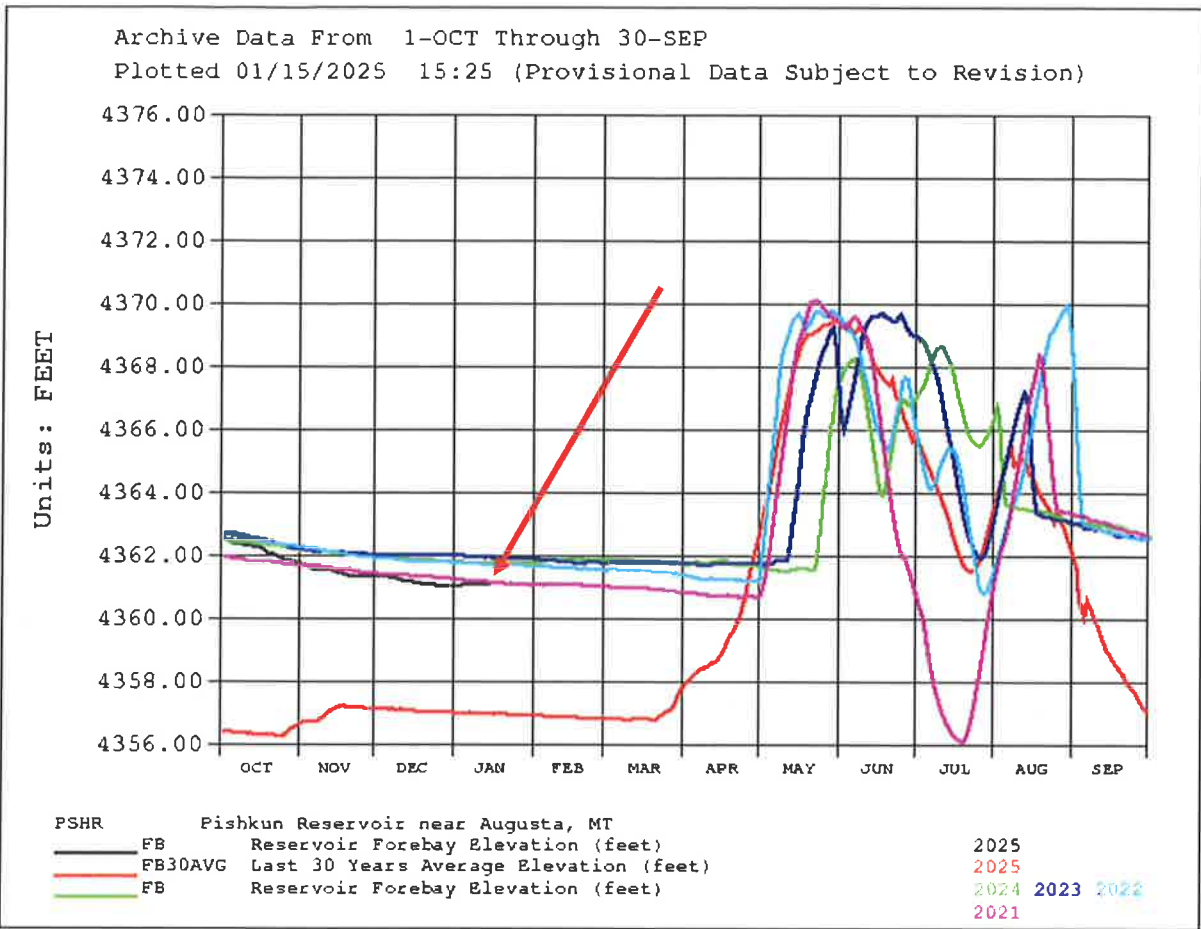
WALDRON

(total precipitation)



WOOD CREEK





In summary.....

1. Gibson inflows continue to be well below normal.
2. Diversion into the WCFC was discontinued on December 12th.
3. Snowpack development has improved but is still behind the 30-year average.

2) GID WATER RIGHT ISSUES

- A. Water Rights Adjudication for Basin 41K continues. **No update.**

3) STAFF UPDATES

- A. The GID Board reached an agreement with the Union membership on Wednesday the 11th before the regular GID Board meeting.
- B. Posted announcement for Water Master. Some internal interest has been realized.
- C. Brad Hanson gave his two-week notice. Will also advertise for a ditch rider.
- D. I need to finish employee evaluations this month.

4) OFFICE IMPROVEMENTS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- A. Several desk computers need replacement. Holding off till 1st of the year.

5) GIS MAPPING, PLATS, DATA BASE, CERTIFICATION, & ASSESSMENTS

- A. Nancy is working on maps and the database.

6) FARM UNIT OPERATIONS

- A. A couple of new pivot installations for the Board's review.

B. Request to Split FU 788 and Create another FU 788.1

1. The landowner of FU 788 is splitting a portion of the FU to award to his wife.
2. Other than the FU split and ownership change, there will be no change in irrigation practice nor coverage and no change in number of assessed acres.
3. **Review handout and address during Agenda portion.**

7) MONTHLY FINANCIALS & 2025 BUDGET

- A. The account receivables for December totaled \$126,512. (mostly Grazing Leases)
- B. Accounts payable for December totaled \$219,942 for the warrants as well as \$57,745 in salaries comprising two pay periods.
- C. Received a proposal to perform the 2024 Annual Audit & any special Audit required.
- D. Need to finalize 2025 Budget for Board review and approval.

8) GID VEHICLES & HEAVY EQUIPMENT

- A. Still looking to replace our 3-axle, lowboy transport trailer which experienced a major breakdown in the spring support brackets. A replacement trailer will cost +/- \$100k.
- B. Both of our new Volvo tractor-trailer combos are experiencing issues and is being addressed as warranty work. Eric to give a detailed update.

9) PEARSON LAWSUIT Ver 2.0

- A. In December, GID received notice from the MT Human Rights Bureau that Spencer and Hilary Pearson filed yet another complaint of marital discrimination in their attempts to disregard GID's acreage limitations policies.
- B. Unfortunately, our insurance carriers have denied coverage and any legal defense.
- C. GID filed our response to the HRB on January 14th.

10)WILLOW CREEK FEEDER CANAL & LAWSUIT

- A. Legal Team provided a Case Analyses and Budget
- B. A scheduling conference was held Tuesday to determine potential Trial dates – Originally November 2024, new potential dates are July 14th, August 18th or the 25th.
- C. Still have a couple of motions pending in District Court.

11)HYDRO UPDATES

- A. General – Regarding GID’s fight with NWE’s intent to update the QF-1 Tariffs.
 1. I’m reviewing the Post-Hearing Response Brief which is due January 24th.
- B. Arnold Coulee LOPP – Still expecting to be on-line Spring of 2026.
 1. **Transmission Design & Construction** –
 - Little has occurred on the construction of the Arnold Coulee transmission leg over the last several months. The Contractor is working for SREC and is expected to resume Arnold Coulee after April 1st.
 2. **Transmission Easements** –
 - A switchyard easement W of Jackson’s Corner is still pending.
 3. **SREC Interconnection & Transmission Agreements** – Nothing new regarding this work. Awaiting finalization of the PPA.
 4. **Power Purchase Agreement** – Negotiations with NWE and WAPA are still going slow, but some progress is happening.
 5. **WEEG WaterSmart Grant** – Nothing new.
 6. **Construction** – Site construction has stalled due to weather.
 - The foundation block is still 18 inches from interior finished floor elevation.
 - Need to finish backfilling around the perimeter.
 - Finished welding the slip flanges on to the draft tube elbows.
 - Working on the design package for the pre-engineered metal building.
 - May not be able to pour the interior floor slab and set turbines until April.
 - Received the penstock transition sections and spools this week.







C. Pishkun Inlet Hydro – **NEPA and NHPA are the critical paths.**

1. **Funding** – Need to go to Helena to support reauthorization of our \$1.5M low interest, DNRC-RRG loan since we did not use it in the last 2 years.
2. **LOPP** – Reclamation to initiate the Final LOPP for this site soon after the Arnold Coulee site kicks loose. This includes the NEPA & NHPA process.
3. **Transmission Easements** –
 - Wetlands study has been completed.
 - The transmission alignment was finalized based on the wetlands study.
 - This was sent to BOR for evaluation before sending to BLM and USACE.
 - SREC will initiate the ROW agreement request from BLM.
4. **Transmission Design & Construction** – Design mostly done, construction has yet to start.
5. **Power Purchase Agreement** – **Have not started this task.**
6. **Design Drawings** – Received updated preliminary drawings.
7. **Turbine-Generator Fabrication** – In Progress.

D. Johnson Drop – **Nothing new.**

E. A-Drop – **Nothing new.**

F. Gibson Hydro – **Nothing new.**

12) GID INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS- Current or Planned

A. Mary Taylor Facility –

1. **Nothing New.** Completed the site topo survey for the PER (preliminary engineering report). The survey data has been processed, and the engineer will begin the PER this Fall. Working under a \$30k planning grant.

B. Hwy 89 Ditch Crossings – Nothing new.

C. Willow Creek Spillway Repair –

1. The hauling of riprap is done. The remaining items include dressing up the haul road, fixing fence, repairing/replacing cattle guards and such.
2. BOR is still working to scope a multimillion-dollar, replacement spillway.

D. Sun River Bridge Replacement

1. Projected Schedule – Still on schedule
 - Bids Opened – \$3.3 Million over budget. The shortfall was covered by the FHWA in order to cover the base bid.
 - The Project was awarded to Hamilton Construction on January 13th.
 - Notice to Proceed will be given in a couple of weeks.
 - The 1st Order of Business will be to hold a Pre-Construction Meeting.
 - Construction will span 2025 and 2026
2. Status of Old Bridge – BOR and the FHWA will still work on getting the historical designation removed so the old bridge can be demo' ed. Unfortunately, this is not part of the base bid and there are currently no funds available to implement bridge demo.

E. Tunnel #3 Rehabilitation –

1. WWC is performing inspection. On track.
2. Starting to erect side walls.

F. J-Waste Way Facility, Spring Coulee Headworks –

1. GID's \$125K RRG grant application submitted on May 15th ranked 21st and was recommended for funding. I will need to go to Helena on Friday the 24th to speak on behalf of the project and provide support.

G. SRS 71 Check Replacement and Reregulation, Phase 2– SRS Main Check

1. Also submitted last May, this \$125K RRG grant application ranked 10th and was recommended for funding. I will need to go to Helena on Friday the 24th to speak on behalf of the project and provide support.

H. Pishkun Outlet Replacement –

1. Our funding application for \$19,054,209 was awarded was BOR. This represents financial assistance regarding extraordinary maintenance work through the Aging Infrastructure Account via the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).
2. There will be a design charette and it is scheduled for the week of April 7th, 2025.
3. Finalized the Project Management Plan (PMP) to guide the process.

13) TITLE TRANSFER

- A. **Nothing new.** Initially I thought that if we enter into a repayment contract for either the Tunnel #3 or Pishkun Inlet LOPP, we could not move forward with Title Transfer. BOR said there is a work-around and now BOR is encouraging GID to assume ownership of everything downstream of the Diversion Dam.

14) MISC GID O&M PROJECTS

- A. Eric will provide a brief verbal update.

15) GID GRAZING LEASE PROGRAM

- A. Ron can provide an update if he is present.

16) DISTRICT MODERIZATION EFFORT WITH FCA

- A. Continuing with bi-weekly meetings with FCA.
- B. Submitting another grant application to DNRC to enhance some existing SCADA/canal measurement locations and create more. This will support overall flow monitoring and control and will eventually support future canal reevaluation sites especially when they get networked together.
- C. Nothing new on the Greenfields Bench Groundwater Study selected by the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. Kick-off, scoping meeting was scheduled for January.
- D. Developing a Scope of Work and Schedule for the System Improvement Plan (SIP) which will advance several efforts.

17) MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Attended a status meeting with BOR in Billings on December 16th and 17th. BOR wanted to discuss GID's long range plans and was concerned about several issues.
 - Need to attend the MWRA Conference in Helena February 11th and 12th. As such, we need to reschedule the next GID Board meeting.
- B. Still no update on the historic Muddy Creek gravel pit closeout. GID received a notification of violation from MT DEQ. Sent an update to DEQ.

18) SHORT-TERM TO DO LIST – JANUARY

- Finish the Post-Hearing Response Brief for the PSC QF-1 Tariffs
- Make progress on Arnold Coulee PPA.
- Closeout Willow Creek Spillway IRRM project.
- Go to Helena on the 21st and the 24th to support our grant and loan awards.
- Monitor repairs to Tunnel #3.
- Finish employee evaluations
- Receive penstock and reducer sections

19) LONG-TERM TO DO LIST – FEBRUARY & ON

- Attend the MWRA conference in Helena on the 11th and 12th.
- Work on another Water SMART grant application.
- Hire a water master and or ditch rider
- Set Turbines at Arnold Coulee before the water season.
- Finalize a Systems Improvement Plan (SIP) with FCA
- Get ready for WCFC trial in late summer

NEXT GID BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 13th @ 6PM???

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