

Corrales Siphon Update
3/8/2022

It has been determined that the Corrales Siphon will not be operable for the 2022 irrigation season. On February 28th, the MRGCD Board approved the 2022 Corrales Pumping Operation and award of the pumping contract at a special meeting. This pump operation will include using two diesel pumps (1 primary & 1 backup) to pump water directly from the Rio Grande into the Corrales Main Canal. The target flow delivery is 20 cubic feet per second (cfs).

The MRGCD has made a service request to PNM for the installation of three-phase electric power as a more efficient means of running the pumps. On February 14, a representative from PNM met MRGCD representatives on-site for an evaluation of the service request. The MRGCD is hopeful service can be provided as soon as possible. However, due to the unknown about how long it will take to get electrical service, the proposal for the diesel pumps covers the entire 2022 irrigation season. This can be adjusted if electric power is delivered to the site sooner.

For the 2022 irrigation season, the MRGCD will have little storage water available and will have to depend on whatever natural flow is present in the Rio Grande for irrigation deliveries in 2022. Considering poor water forecasts and a large outstanding Rio Grande Compact debt, the MRGCD is warning all irrigators to expect significant limitations to irrigation delivery. This is especially so for irrigators served by the Corrales Main Canal, its laterals and acequia, given the Corrales Siphon is not operational. Irrigators served by these canals should be especially cautious when making farming plans for this season and carefully consider their water needs, and those of others.

On March 9th, funding was approved by the State legislature for the MRGCD's new Emergency Fallowing Program (EFP). The program will provide financial compensation for irrigators who voluntarily forgo irrigation this season. There is no danger of losing a water right for non-use when it is due to water shortage. The MRGCD is now enrolling farmers on a voluntary basis in the 2022 Fallowing and Leasing Program. For questions about the Fallowing and Leasing Program contact Casey Ish at casey@mrgcd.us or call him at 505-259-8799 after reviewing the enrollment form.

It is expected the Corrales Pumping Operation will be operational by April 1 and charging of the Corrales system will begin in earnest. Farmers with early-season crop needs should start to receive water deliveries on or around April 4. Please contact your Irrigation System Operator (ISO) for scheduling information.