

EBID**Staff Members**

Gary L. Esslinger, Treasurer/Manager
 Henry Magallanez, Engineer
 Ricardo Bejarano, Water Master
 Gall Norvell, Controller
 James Narvaez, Hydrology Director
 Valerie Beversdorf, CGRS Director
 Leo Barnett, Maintenance Project Director

Elephant Butte Irrigation District Of New Mexico

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Board of Directors

James Salopek, President
 Robert Faubion, Vice-President
 Willie Koenig, Secretary
 Jerry Franzoy
 Robert Sloan
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 Ramon Alvarez
 Scott Adams

EBID BOARD SETS DATES FOR 2011 IRRIGATION SEASON

The Board of Directors of Elephant Butte Irrigation District has set May 31st as the start date for the 2011 irrigation season for farmers in the Hatch, Rincon and Mesilla Valleys of southern New Mexico. Water in the canals will be visibly seen beginning the first week of June.

This year's allotment will begin with four acre-inches of water for irrigation based on the availability of 52,000 acre feet that is currently sitting in Elephant Butte Lake for EBID farmers. A lingering drought and a snowpack that was adversely affected by windy, dry weather in the upper Rio Grande Basin is having an impact. However spring runoff is still uncertain at this time and EBID cannot allot one drop more until it reaches the reservoir.

EBID will start taking water orders May 23rd through the water records office during normal working hours and will open the gates at Caballo Dam on May 31st based on the initial order. EBID Treasurer/Manager, Gary Esslinger, says there are some scenarios that could increase the 2011 allotment over the summer but added that the Districts' Board must work only with what is in storage at this point in time for EBID constituents. The Board has asked the New Mexico Compact Commission to relinquish 100,000 acre-feet of credit water to the district but so far the Rio Grande Compact Commissioner has refused to do so. Esslinger said EBID will continue to work toward an equitable solution. "We have to work with the known quantities of water while continuing to look at other scenarios that could provide additional water as well as benefit our farm families and our important agriculture industry," Esslinger said. In a recent letter from EBID Board Chairman James Salopek to Texas Rio Grande Compact Commissioner Pat Gordon the EBID said "the New Mexico (State Engineer John D'Antonio) and Texas Compact Commissioners need to come together to support and advance the interests of the constituency in this area."

Based on EBID's share of the water in Elephant Butte Lake, the 2011 irrigation season could end by as early as July 2nd. Small tract farms with two acres or less also known as "flat-raters" would receive one irrigation sometime during the end of June but there is still the possibility of extending the irrigation season with what little spring runoff could reach the dam starting in mid June.

Board discussion also included the possible upcoming summer monsoon season which is far from certain but could bring additional moisture to the region. Irrigation board member Tom Simpson said during the meeting that "the uncertainty of certainty is one thing farmers understand." EBID hydrological consultant, Phil King, said "It's easier to forecast what the climate will be in 50 years than it is to predict the weather in six months."

Esslinger said while droughts are part of life in the desert it's fortunate that the irrigation district has developed a unique network of canals and drains for capturing storm water runoff and has devised a system to store, conserve and productively utilize storm water as a vital resource for the area. "We can pray for rain but in our business we also plan for drought," Esslinger said. EBID employees are working to get the comprehensive system of canals, laterals, drains and diversion dams ready to move water through the 350 miles of gravity flow conveyances within the District boundaries.

DAVID E TELLEZ TRUST
DAVID E TELLEZ TRUSTEE
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***** Growers Meetings *****

North - May 18, 2011 8:00 – 10:00 AM
Hatch Community Center
837 Highway 187, Hatch, NM 87937

Central - May 19, 2011 8:00 – 10:00 AM
Days Inn – Mesilla Valley Conference Center
901 Avenida de Mesilla, Las Cruces, NM 88005

South - May 20, 2011 8:00 – 10:00 AM
Anthony Country Club
2100 W. O'Hara Road, Anthony, NM 88021