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IRRIGATION INSIGHT

Grand Valley Irrigation Company

GVIC's Main Headgate

BY NICOLE MUNIZ



GVIC is finalizing a major renovation of the diversion structure and fish screen at the Palisade headgates. This project required years of planning and funding, in coordination with the Bureau of Reclamation's upgrade of the endangered fish screen next to GVIC's headgates. Last year, we completed the rehabilitation and construction of the diversion dam that channels river water to GVIC's headgates, and now we're upgrading the old radial flood gates and the main canal delivery point headgates. The outdated steel radial gates have been replaced with new stainless steel pneumatic gates, allowing for more efficient water delivery control.

These gates will improve both operational safety and long-term efficiency. Several tasks remain before the installation is complete and the canal can be opened; GVIC employees and contractors are working hard to finish the job.



Photo courtesy of J.Conrad (main headgates)

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The Grand Valley is facing ongoing drought conditions, and many shareholders have asked when water will be available and how much to expect. The short answer is “soon” and “uncertain.” GVIC will not be starting diversion until after April 1, due to final construction work on our main headgates. This long-planned project is critical to improving the safety, efficiency, and reliability of our system.

As GVIC President Sean Norris explains, “This project has taken years of planning in coordination with the Bureau of Reclamation. We’ve upgraded our headgates to improve water delivery, but several key tasks remain before the canal can be opened.”



Photo courtesy of Kissner G.C. (from fish screen project update)

Once water is released, it takes about a week for the canal system to fully charge in part due to absorption. More importantly, in order to safely fill the system, it must be done gradually to avoid damage to the system. As the canal fills gradually, laterals also turn on gradually, allowing for greater flows of water to be increasingly pushed down the canal until the system is function as an organic unit.

Early-season demand should focus on helping the system stabilize, while avoiding unnecessary runoff or waste once water reaches your property. It is the duty under state law of every shareholder to see that he receives no more water from the canal through his headgate, or by any ways or means whatsoever, than the amount to which he is entitled. Beneficial and efficient use of water, as required under Colorado water law, remains essential. **(CRS § 37-84-108/124)**

We ask shareholders to remain patient, communicate with neighbors and lateral users, and work together to balance system needs with conservation. This will be a challenging season, but the Grand Valley has always risen to meet these challenges.

" I ask for your patience—please allow the ditch riders to fill and prepare the canal before opening your headgates. Slow and steady ensures a smoother start for this demanding water year."

SEAN NORRIS



Sean Norris President of GVIC's Board of Directors full letter can be found on our website:

<https://www.grandvalleyirrigation.com/resources/>