



TABER IRRIGATION DISTRICT

# Amalgamation



St. Mary River Irrigation District



# District Facts

## Facts about TID

- Currently 90,347 irrigation acres
- Operates and maintains 3 reservoirs totalling 13,420 acre feet of live storage
- 212.9 km of pipeline (GOA reported figures from 2020)
- 138.4 km of open canals (Includes membrane lined, concrete lined, earth and un-rehabilitated)
- 2021 water rates - \$ 23.50/acre

## Facts about SMRID

- Currently 410,219 irrigation acres
- Operates and maintains 12 reservoirs totalling 359,590 acre feet of live storage
- 1,018.9 km of pipeline (GOA reported figures from 2020)
- 802.3 km of open canals (Includes membrane lined, concrete lined, earth and un-rehabilitated)
- 2021 water rates - \$ 23.00/acre

## Combined figures

- 500,566 irrigation acres
- 15 reservoirs totalling 373,010 acre feet of live storage
- 1,231.8 km of pipeline
- 940.7 km of open canals



# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1: Will my annual water rates go up as a result of the proposed amalgamation?**

A: We are not planning on raising annual water rates at this time. Amalgamating will create potential savings and stabilize rates.

**Q2: If there is expansion in the future, will the cost of new irrigation acres be impacted due to this amalgamation?**

A: No, our pricing, yet to be determined, would have been the same if we were to remain separate districts. We have already discussed between Districts that any future expansion would be at the same Capital Asset Charge (CAC)

**Q3: Will my water allocation go down?**

A: No. The allocation is based on our individual licenses which will be combined after the amalgamation.

**Q4: Will there be a change to my level of service when I order water?**

A: We both request 24 hour notice to order and shut off water. Initially, we will operate areas with the existing service levels currently being delivered. We will review existing policies and look to optimize services and costs. Strong customer service will be our priority.

**Q5: Will my water coordinator change?**

A: We do not plan on changing how we currently operate the respective areas. We will review area boundaries in the future while maintaining or improving quality of service.

**Q6: Will we lose any of our infrastructure funding by amalgamating?**

A: No, the amounts will be combined for the new District.

**Q7: What are the planned infrastructure projects?**

A: SMRID has 26 modernization projects planned and TID has one modernization project planned that will save approximately 40,000 ac-ft of water through reduced seepage, evaporation and spill. The cost of these planned modernization projects is \$168,000,000.

In addition, both Districts are participating in the planned Chin reservoir expansion along with the Raymond Irrigation District. This expansion will generate between 75,000-100,000 acre feet of additional storage for our Districts. The budgeted cost for the reservoir is \$133,000,000.

**Q8: Why do you want to do this amalgamation now?**

A: When each district started looking at possible expansion within our respective districts, it became clear it would be more efficient to plan for irrigation acre expansion as one district.

Planning for potential expansion as one district will prevent “checkerboard” expansion along the Main Canal which would result in inefficient infrastructure development at the cost to the irrigators.

We have been collaborating for a long time on the Main Canal and other initiatives such as Irrican Power Co-Operative. A recent example is both Districts are planning on purchasing land for the Horsefly Spillway project.



**Q9: What are the benefits to the TID or SMRID of doing this?**

**A: There are numerous benefits:**

- More efficient operation of the St. Mary Project Main Canal and reservoirs as it was originally designed. It was really meant to be one district from an operational design, however, became separate due to historical/logistical reasons.
- Ability for Taber area water users to access larger pool of monies for more efficient execution of IRP projects. TID only receives about 25% of SMRID's IRP funding and traditionally has to phase projects or save up over 3-4 years between projects, which has gotten worse with the reduction in IRP. This will allow for much more efficient planning and execution of capital projects in the Taber area.
- More efficient irrigation acre transfers, water allocation transfers, (the same water users in both Districts) as well, more efficient Alternate Parcel Agreements. This will lead to more efficient use of existing infrastructure (e.g turnouts on the main canal)
- Project cost sharing - e.g. Sauder and Horsefly spill projects. These projects benefit both SMRID and TID water users so the cost sharing discussions become unnecessary. It's not TID/SMRID sharing costs to the project, it's just one District.
- Larger assessment role after our Districts amalgamate. The new total will be over 500,000 acres, which will mean a larger revenue base and therefore rate stability for the future.
- Combining workforces will provide experienced staff resources and new opportunities to help address staff attrition facing both Districts due to upcoming planned retirements.
- Best practices can be developed for administration functions, ie policy and bylaw tracking, automated functions for accounting and document management system.
- Increased utilization of buildings and equipment, (eg. The Taber welding facility and Broxburn/Bow Island tracked equipment).

**Q10: Will there be lost jobs as a result of the amalgamation?**

A: TID and SMRID will continue to operate as they have been until we are able to assess where we both can improve on existing policies. To complete the large volume of work ahead of us, we will require staff to be able to plan and execute our infrastructure projects.

**Q11: How will board representation change?**

A: Board representation will be proportional to area served.

**Q12: Will the TID office close?**

A: No. The TID office and shop location will be an integral part of the new combined district.

**Q13: Will the Broxburn or Bow Island facilities close?**

A: These are intended to be included in future operations.

**Q14: Who is able to vote for this proposed amalgamation?**

A: You must own irrigation acres in TID to be eligible to vote.

**Q15: What will be the name of the District?**

A: St. Mary River Irrigation District. The St. Mary River is our shared source of water, so it seems appropriate to retain the name for our shared district.

