

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Conservation Success Profile

Idaho

Gravity Pressurized Irrigation Delivery System Marysville Irrigation Company



Project Quick Facts

Total Project Cost.....\$4.25 million
EQIP Financial Assistance\$1,857,750
NRCS share of project 41%
Number of Contracts41
Acres Treated6,114
Pipeline Installed 122,000 feet (23 miles)
Project Location: Eastern Idaho, Fremont County
Resource concerns addressed:
Irrigation Efficiency, Water Quality, Soil Quality, Energy Conservation, Fisheries Habitat



Project Overview

The Marysville Irrigation Company's irrigation pipeline project was a large cooperative conservation project to reconstruct an irrigation ditch system with the purpose of saving both water and energy.

For decades, the Marysville Irrigation Company board of directors discussed improving their canal system to use the sloping landscape to deliver pressurized water more efficiently to farmers. But the cost of improving the system was more than the irrigation users could realistically afford.

When the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills allowed EQIP to help fund a portion of these types of projects, the Marysville Irrigation Company applied for funding to replace the ditch system. They proposed converting the ditches to buried pipeline pressurized by gravity which would conserve both water and

electricity. In 2006, they received national and state EQIP funding from NRCS for the project.

At the end of 2008, the Irrigation Company completed the second phase of the project. The open ditch system was replaced with 23 miles of buried pipeline. The project's design used gravity to pressurize the system and eliminated most of the need for electric irrigation pumps. The project provided a reliable water supply, reduced irrigation water use, conserved water lost through seepage, reduced electric energy consumption, and provided economic stability to the local area

Directly, the project affected 43 farms, 6,100 acres of cropland, 100 small acreage holders, and a high school sports complex. But the benefits to the environment and the public extend beyond the project area. Below are some examples.

"Progress is what comes to mind when I think of why this is a good project. First of all, there's the water savings, second - the lower energy costs, third - removing the ditches so we can more efficiently irrigate, controls weeds and eliminate waste water and top it all off with the 50% cost-share we're getting from USDA. It's what we needed to update our system. We are grateful for the planning and financial assistance we received from the NRCS."

Jeff Jenkins, Marysville Canal Company President

Public Benefits

Soil

- Reduced soil erosion by removing eroding, high-gradient canals
- Eliminated sediment reaching the Henry's Fork of the Snake River

Water Quantity

- Saved over 2 billion gallons of water annually which is returned to the Snake River and helps to recharge the Snake River Plain aquifer.
- Improved irrigation efficiency for project participants' fields.