

HERMISTON IRRIGATION DISTRICT



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January 22, 2021

Re: SB 130: Extending the Irrigation District Pilot Project

Dear Committee Members,

Thank You for your consideration of SB 130: Extending the Irrigation District Pilot Project. Hermiston Irrigation District (HID) has used this project for a number of years and has had great success with the District Transfer Pilot Program.

Over the last five years, HID has submitted sixty-two transfers. For a total of over 347 acres of water rights that were temporarily transferred. This program has allowed our District to temporarily transfer water to make beneficial use of it. In some instances, this project has allowed us to prolong the water right, instead of risking the loss of the water right to forfeiture or confiscation.

For example, our District has been able to supply Oregon State University, Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center (HAREC) with over fifty acres of water right each year, for the last two years. HAREC is able to enhance their ability to grow, share, educate, and develop our natural resources with additional serviceable acres of irrigated land. Also, improving economic vitality and promoting environmental health.

The Pilot Program helps keep costs down for the District, the patrons, and the Oregon Water Resources Department. It gives Districts flexibility to establish beneficial use for potential permanent water rights transfers. Thus, allowing us to assess the change prior to making a permanent application for transfer.

We would appreciate your recommendation of the continuation of this project. Continuance of this project would allow for further assessment of its implementation, allow for more management flexibility, and keep cost down for our agricultural users.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about how this project benefits our District, feel free to give me a call.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Annette Kirkpatrick".

Annette Kirkpatrick
District Manager