

Stanfield Irrigation District

100 W Coe / PO Box 416
Stanfield, OR 97875
Office 541-449-3272 / Fax 541-449-1239
stanfieldid@stanid.com

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RE: Extending the District Temporary Transfer Pilot Program

Dear members of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery Committee,

The Pilot Program has had a great impact for our patrons from our bigger farmers to residential land owners. Most of our farmers have 40–80-acre square tracts that have water rights, and they have put pivots on (circle irrigation) that end up leaving the corners unirrigated. The Pilot Program works well in allowing those farmers to add up all the acres in those corners and temporarily transfer those water rights for the year to another field within the district boundaries. Then the farmers don't have to purchase and install hand lines to get water to the corners of those square tracts cutting the cost of labor, time and materials. All while keeping the water rights in our district, allowing them to comply with the 5-year non-use and giving them the opportunity to diversify their crops.

The Pilot Program is also beneficial to residential land owners as well as our small farmers. It helps the elderly and widowers who have smaller tracts of land (0.50-10.0 acres) and are no longer able to get out there to care for their land and use their water rights. It allows them the opportunity to obtain "beneficial use" by renting their water rights to other land owners within the district boundaries who would otherwise not have the ability to irrigate their land. If the District or OWRD were to charge to do a temporary transfer of their water right, they might not be able to afford it, but the program allows them to keep their water right that is pertinent to their land by allowing another land owner to temporarily use it.

We have also found by using the Pilot Program it makes it easier when a patron who has been taking advantage of the program doing temporary transfer decides they would like to do a permanent transfer. Because we would know before filing the permanent transfer if there was any problems or discrepancies in the land and water rights involved, since the temporary transfers had already been reviewed when we send them to the local Watermaster each year.

I have been the Manager for Stanfield Irrigation District for 20+ years. I believe in this Pilot Program and our patrons who have benefited from using the program believe in it as well, and we all hope the program gets extended, eventually being made permanent.

Sincerely,

Ray Kopacz
District Manager