

## Water Supply Update – August 24, 2023

Our current water supply situation is relatively good for late August in a year of severe drought. Some key points are listed below:

- Current usable storage in McGregor, Travers, and Little Bow Reservoirs is 271,000 acre feet, which is 55,000 acre feet below normal total usable winter storage. However, it is still 68 % of full storage. Reservoirs are built to supply water when required, and we have benefited tremendously from them this year.
- Our diversion from Little Bow Reservoir, which supplies over 90% of the irrigated acres, is 299,000 acre feet to date, which is 40% above average for this period. The yearly average for the past 25 years is only 265,000 acre feet. This is still trending to be our fourth highest water use year ever, after 2001, 2000, and 1988, although water use has declined sharply in recent weeks.
- Our diversion from Little Bow Reservoir from August 1 through August 24 was only 41,800 acre feet, which is slightly below average for this period. Our current daily diversion from Little Bow is 525 cubic feet per second, which is below average for this date.
- The Bow River flow remains low due to dry conditions in the mountains, but we are diverting well over 1000 cubic feet per second most days, so reservoir levels are increasing slowly this week.
- Return flow continues to be well below average.

Some other irrigation districts have needed to implement significant water use restrictions this year, and some will end water deliveries much earlier than usual. Our Board of Directors reviewed our situation again at their August 23 regular meeting and confirmed that we will not implement restrictions beyond our normal limits this year. They also determined that the final date for delivery of water from reservoirs into canals will be Monday October 2, which is a few days earlier than normal. Many irrigators will still have water available a day or two after that as canals gradually drain. We will continue to divert from the river as long as possible to refill reservoirs for next year.

Your cooperation in ordering water on and off and responsible use of water has been vital to our success so far. Thank you.

The Alberta River Basins website provides current information on water levels and flows for many reservoirs, lakes, rivers, and canals throughout the province including several relevant to our district. It can be accessed at <https://rivers.alberta.ca/> and a mobile app is also available.