

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Projects

National Elk Refuge — June 3, 2010



Irrigation Expansion Project

A milestone was reached this week as workers completed fusing the 5.2 miles of main line pipe. Crews began trenching, installing, and backfilling the pipeline at the north end of the project several weeks ago, averaging approximately 600 feet per day as they work through rocky soil.

In the areas where the underground main line pipe installation is completed, the disturbed areas are being returned to their original condition through an established remediation process. Staff will monitor the areas for

natural regrowth and invasive species.

In addition to the main line work, approximately 80% of the lateral lines have been laid out and some fusing already completed. Lateral lines are pipeline extensions running off the main line, carrying water through smaller diameter pipes to specific irrigation sites.

This week, a key project was anchoring pipe to the main head gate on Flat Creek. The head gate, built in 1995, was originally designed to accommodate two pipes. However, only one 1,000-foot section of 27" diameter pipe was

originally installed, with the second never completed or operational. To increase the capacity, crews temporarily diverted water flow away from the head gate to allow them to attach a second 1,000-foot section of pipe to the concrete structure. The two sections of pipe will be joined by a manifold and will feed into the 42" diameter pipe recently installed at the head of the irrigation project.

National Elk Refuge staff completed filling in approximately 100 miles of old irrigation ditches, previously used for flood irrigation. A newly-constructed V-plow, a ditch plow, and a back filler disc were all

Before the pipeline is backfilled, a screening bucket removes any debris larger than what is outlined in the specifications.



used during the restoration work, depending on the sensitivity of the area, the amount of rock in the soil, and the size of the existing ditches. After the ditches were closed, they were harrowed and reseeded with a mix of native grasses.

North Highway 89 Pathway Project

National Elk Refuge staff participated in the Jackson Hole Community Pathways spring survey on May 13, an assessment

conducted twice yearly to measure pathway use and gather general statistical data on users. Volunteers were placed at key locations along the pathway to count the total number of users during a designated time period and categorize use.

Outdoor Recreation Planner Lori Iverson staffed the area across from the National Museum of Wildlife Art, located 2.5 miles north of Jackson and including the area where the new North Highway 89 pathway project is underway. The information collected during the survey will provide data to measure use prior and after the completion of the Highway 89 pathway section. Refuge staff will do several of their own informal counts later this summer.

While excavation continues on the south end of the pathway near the Flat Creek Bridge in Jackson, crews have been working near the north end of Phase I, or approximately 3.5 miles north of town, to build up a side hill near the Jackson National Fish Hatchery. The design criteria includes a

A new section of 24" diameter pipeline (top) is fastened to the concrete headgate next to an existing 27" pipeline (bottom). Water from Flat Creek was temporarily diverted during the operation.



Evans Construction moves a stockpile of fill material onto the pathway route to mitigate a steep grade increase.



restriction that pathway grades must be limited to less than a 5% longitudinal slope, making them compliant with American Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Without the side hill work, the pathway would present an approximate 10% grade increase, a steep gain that would not fit within the scope of the project.

Beginning this past winter, Teton County began collecting available fill material from other county and private projects and storing it near the Fish Hatchery's entrance for use in the pathway construction. The reuse of fill material from other projects has resulted in a cost savings of approximately \$75,000.

with over half of the design process completed. The design team is focusing on fine tuning interpretive panel text, consolidating resource materials, and preparing for fabrication, which is scheduled to begin in late September.

Jackson Hole & Greater Yellowstone Visitor Center Exhibits

U.S. Fish & Wildlife staff continues to work with Formations, Inc. on new exhibits for the Visitor Center,