



Declaration re  
Sharing Water for Human Needs and Livestock Sustenance  
During Water Shortages  
December 6, 2010

The Alberta Irrigation Projects Association is composed of all 13 irrigation districts in Alberta, duly constituted under the *Irrigation Districts Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. I-11. These member districts of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association declare the following:

WHEREAS the member districts of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association have been granted water licences, by the Government of Alberta, of considerable quantity for irrigation under the principle of prior allocation; and

WHEREAS the member districts of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association have prior right to some licensed water relative to the right of some municipal licensees and other domestic water users in the area of the Province of Alberta within and surrounding the irrigation districts, and

WHEREAS the members of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association recognize that water is vital to sustain human health and well-being, and that of livestock, and

WHEREAS drought conditions are recurrent in southern Alberta as a result of variability of the weather;

**THEREFORE** the member districts of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association agree to the following:

In the case of water shortage due to drought conditions that can occur in southern Alberta, the member districts of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association assure, within their right to control, the following:

- i) the member districts will participate in water sharing by temporary assignments with other licence holders with lower priority, in accordance with section 33 of the Water Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. W-3, in good faith, so that sufficient water can be distributed for human needs and livestock sustenance, and
- ii) no fee will be assessed for these temporary assignments of water for meeting human needs and livestock sustenance.

Temporary assignments may specify a proviso for water conservation measures that is reasonable and appropriate given conditions of the drought and water supply at the time.

## Background Information:

Alberta's 13 irrigation districts deliver water to over 500,000 hectares of land to grow 42 different crops such as sweet corn, potatoes, sugar beets, dry beans, wheat, barley, alfalfa, specialty crops and many types of vegetables. The districts also deliver water to 48 communities and thousands of rural households. The water allocated to the districts collectively is approximately 3.4 billion cubic metres of water annually, 63% of which is used on-average.

The Alberta Irrigation Projects Association (AIPA) is a facilitating umbrella organization of the districts which helps the districts achieve the goal: "We seek after the highest standards of water management in support of the economic and social well-being of Alberta's people and the health of its landscapes and water resources."

In the year 2001, a year of severe drought, the irrigation districts worked with other licensees, facilitated by Alberta Environment and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, to share water so that water would be available for communities, industry, and other agricultural operations. This spirit of community cooperation among nearly all licensees was recognized with an award from the Irrigation Association, an international organization based in the USA. It is in that spirit of community cooperation that the Irrigation Districts of Alberta make the above declaration. AIPA member districts include:

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