unsworn declaration made under 24 CFR 16.4.

EXEMPTIONS PROMULGATED FOR THE SYSTEM:

None.

HISTORY: NONE.

Kimberly Morton,

Acting Chief Privacy Officer, Office of Administration.

[FR Doc. 2026–15421 Filed 7–29–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210–67–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

[267A2100DD/AAKC001030/A0A501010.000000]

Rate Adjustments for Indian Irrigation Projects

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) owns or has an interest in irrigation projects located on or associated with various Indian reservations throughout the United States. We are required to establish irrigation assessment rates to recover the costs to administer, operate, maintain, and rehabilitate these projects. We are notifying you that we have adjusted the irrigation assessment rates at several of our irrigation projects and facilities to reflect current costs of administration, operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation.

DATES: The 2027 Irrigation Assessment Rates are effective on January 1, 2027.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Leslie Underwood, Program Specialist, Division of Water and Power, Office of Trust Services, (406) 657–5985. For details about a particular BIA irrigation project, please use the tables in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section to contact the BIA regional or local office where the irrigation project is located. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Notice of Proposed Rate Adjustment was published in the **Federal Register** on March 23, 2026 (91 FR 13856) to propose adjustments to the irrigation assessment rates at several BIA irrigation projects. The public and interested parties were provided an opportunity to submit written comments during the 60-day period that ended May 22, 2026.

Did BIA defer or change any proposed rate increases?

No, BIA did not defer any proposed rate increases.

Did BIA receive any comments on the proposed irrigation assessment rate adjustments?

Yes. BIA received a total of nine (9) written comments related to the proposed 2027 irrigation assessment rate adjustments: two related to the Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project (CRIP), which included comments from the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) and an individual; and seven related to the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP), which included comments from six individuals and legal counsel for the Flathead Irrigation District. The comments were received by letter and email.

What issues were of concern to the commenters?

BIA's summary of the issues and responses are provided below.

The following comments are specific to the Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project (CRIP):

Comment: CRIT requests a lower assessment, raising concerns related to rates increasing too quickly and impacts on irrigators' budgets.

Response: As noted when rates were proposed in the **Federal Register** on March 23, 2026 (91 FR 13856) and at our January tribal consultation and February water user meeting, BIA is required to establish irrigation assessment rates that recover the costs to administer, operate, maintain, and rehabilitate our projects. BIA's projects are important economic contributors to the local communities they serve, and they contribute millions of dollars in crop value annually. However, the costs associated with operating and maintaining an irrigation project may increase independently of prices and costs that are realized by the irrigators. Historically, BIA tempered irrigation rates to demonstrate sensitivity and lessen economic impact on water users, but that past practice created rate deficiencies at several irrigation projects. Therefore, funding to operate and maintain these projects must come directly from the water users they serve.

BIA's irrigation program has been the subject of several Office of Inspector General (OIG) and U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) audits. In the most recent OIG audit, No. 96–I–641, March 1996, the OIG concluded:

Operation and maintenance revenues were insufficient to maintain the projects, and some projects had deteriorated to the extent that their continued capability to deliver water was in doubt. This occurred because operation and maintenance rates were not based on the full cost of delivering irrigation water, including the costs of systematically rehabilitating and replacing project facilities and equipment, and because project personnel did not seek regular rate increases to cover the full cost of project operation.

To address these deficiencies, BIA must systematically review irrigation assessment rates and adjust them to reflect the full cost of operation and maintenance of project infrastructure and to ensure its safe and reliable operation. Failure to make timely rate adjustments allows deficiencies to accumulate, eventually requiring larger, more abrupt increases over shorter periods than would have been otherwise necessary. By adjusting rates with actual rising costs (such as inflation, labor, materials, and construction) CRIP can secure essential resources through strategies like long-term contracts and bulk purchasing, safeguard against future price increases, and ensure the timely maintenance and replacement of critical infrastructure. These financial adjustments also enable the agency to address high-priority needs promptly, maintain reserve funding, and invest in staff recruitment and training, all of which contribute to more reliable water delivery and improved project operations. Ultimately, increased O&M revenues provide necessary funding to maintain and enhance infrastructure, ensuring dependable service to the irrigators, and support long-term agricultural productivity.

CRIP's assessments increased minimally from 2004 and 2024. We must now increase assessments by larger increments to keep up with rising construction, inflation, and maintenance costs. Additional revenues are necessary to fill staffing vacancies and complete major rehabilitation activities identified in modernization studies. The CRIP budget was developed in accordance with BIA's financial guidelines. Based on increased costs associated with administrating, operating, maintaining, and rehabilitating the project, the proposed rate increase is clearly needed and justified.

We appreciate CRIT's participation in our public meetings and comments regarding how to improve CRIP, and we have sent a follow-up letter to CRIT with additional details.

Comment: CRIT is concerned about CRIP's deferred maintenance exceeding $145 million and requests funding from other sources other than irrigation assessment rates.

Response: Over the past several years, BIA has received $24 million in annual appropriations from Congress to help address the significant deferred maintenance needs across its 17 BIA-owned irrigation projects, which total an estimated $2.39 billion as of April 26, 2026. BIA will continue to allocate its limited appropriations among the projects using our priority ranking system. BIA recently spent a significant amount of its appropriations on priority deferred maintenance projects at CRIP by providing engineering, design, and construction funds to CRIP; from fiscal years 2022 through 2025, BIA allocated over $25 million in supplemental funding to CRIP for deferred maintenance projects. In addition, the Bureau of Reclamation committed up to $5 million in 2025 to CRIT to fund planning, design, and study of a Main Canal Re-Regulation Reservoir on the CRIT reservation. Also, CRIT received a $1.2 million grant from the Bureau of Reclamation in CY 2025 to complete an infrastructure assessment of CRIP, which BIA looks forward to reviewing.

Comment: CRIT is concerned with the high number of vacancies resulting in decreased irrigation service and requests authority to immediately fill all CRIP vacancies, pay staff higher wages, and assign an economist or accountant to assist with budgeting and rate calculations. Another commentor is concerned with chronic understaffing that leads to preventable failures and decreasing reliability in water service.

Response: BIA is similarly concerned with low staffing levels at CRIP and is taking all available steps to address these challenges within legal and regulatory limits. In 2025, CRIP experienced the departure of its project manager, program assistant, and two lead irrigation system operators (ditch riders).

Although BIA received an exemption from the federal hiring freeze in spring 2025 to fill two ditch rider positions, those positions remain vacant despite multiple advertisements on *USAJOBS.com.* While CRIP's staffing levels are low, existing staff continue to take on additional duties and work overtime to ensure water delivery to all irrigators. BIA's Western Region Irrigation and Utility Services Program also provides accounting and budgeting support through a Financial Analyst who serves all Western Region irrigation projects, including CRIP.

Under Executive Order 14356, Ensuring Continued Accountability in Federal Hiring (Oct. 15, 2025), BIA is required to submit an Annual Staffing Plan to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the White House's Office of Management and Budget. Several CRIP priority positions have been approved for recruitment in fiscal year 2026 and will be advertised until filled, with additional positions expected to be considered for approval in the fourth quarter of 2026. Federal wage rates, including those applicable to BIA employees, are set by OPM and governing statutes and cannot be adjusted by the agency.

In January 2026, Congress authorized the Department of the Interior to recruit and directly appoint qualified individuals into the competitive service who are certified as maintaining a permanent and exclusive residence in the vicinity of the field unit into any position at or below grades GS–9. Public Law 119–74, 127 (Jan. 23, 2026). BIA plans to include ''Field Unit Local Hiring'' eligibility on CRIP job announcements at or below grades GS–9. We are optimistic this new authority will expedite BIA's hiring process.

The 2027 CRIP budget includes funding for 13 vacant positions, including a project manager, program assistant, equipment operator, two supervisory ditch riders, and eight ditch riders. While BIA has not yet submitted its fiscal year 2027 Annual Staffing Plan, BIA anticipates requesting approval to fill all 13 funded vacant positions. If approval to advertise all positions is not granted for 2027, BIA will utilize contractors to perform necessary work. Any unspent personnel funds will be allocated to CRIP's emergency, sinking, and rehabilitation and replacement funds.

Comment: CRIT and another commenter object to CRIP's budget expense for purchasing new vehicles and equipment because cuts to staffing levels results in fewer people available to operate the equipment. The commenters recommend BIA instead sell old equipment.

Response: CRIP's 2027 budget does not include funding to purchase new equipment, rather it includes funding for maintenance of our existing equipment. Moreover, despite current staffing vacancies within CRIP, it remains important to procure vehicles for staff usage. Vehicles remain essential for field operations, and the Project must maintain sufficient fleet capacity for existing personnel to perform required duties. CRIP has historically leased all its vehicles, which results in higher long-term costs than ownership. To reduce recurring expenses, CRIP has budgeted to incrementally reduce its number of leased vehicles over the next several years to government-owned vehicles, which accounts for the higher vehicle-related funding in the 2027 budget compared to 2025 actual leasing costs. Once the Project transitions to owning vehicles, CRIP's annual vehicle expense will decrease and result in long-term budget savings.

Comment: One commentor requests implementation of a formal work order and tracking system.

Response: CRIP utilizes an established asset management system known as Maximo, which is used across all BIA programs. Maximo is the Department of the Interior's (DOI) enterprise software for facilities and asset management and is used to track and manage facility maintenance, dam safety, operations and maintenance, deferred maintenance, work orders, and asset-related reporting. CRIP creates and closes Maximo work orders for rehabilitation, replacement, and maintenance of project facilities and equipment.

In addition to Maximo, the BIA Division of Water and Power recently launched a pilot electronic water ticketing system at CRIP. Phase 1 of the water ticketing system provides CRIP staff with access to an electronic database to record irrigators' water ticket requests and BIA water deliveries. Potential future functions, subject to the availability of appropriations for system development, include integration with BIA's irrigation billing system, improved scheduling of water deliveries, and customer water request portal. The water ticketing system is designed to streamline and improve communication, documentation, and responsiveness. After completing the pilot with CRIP, BIA Division of Water and Power plans to eventually implement the water ticketing system at all BIA irrigation projects.

The following comments are specific to the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP):

Comment: Three commentors express concerns about lack of maintenance and deferred maintenance and object to rate increases until quality of service improves.

Response: Because BIA does not have discretionary funds to subsidize the BIA irrigation projects, funding to operate and maintain these projects comes primarily from operations and assessment revenues. Several Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports and Inspector General (IG) audits have found BIA irrigation assessment rates need to increase significantly. (*see, e.g.,* IG Report No. 96–641, March 1996; GAO Report 06–314, February 2006). In 2008, in response to these audits, BIA published updated regulations for its irrigation projects and declared its intent to ''systematically review and evaluate [operation and maintenance] rates and adjust them, when necessary, to reflect the full costs to properly operate and perform all appropriate maintenance . . . to ensure safe and reliable operation'' and to avoid the accumulation of further rate deficiencies (73 FR 32043, 32044). Since 2013 when BIA reassumed FIIP operation and maintenance, BIA has repeatedly acknowledged the need to increase operation and maintenance assessments and routinely noticed its intent to raise assessments.

Assessment rates are commensurate with our quality of irrigation service, so we must increase rates to improve service. The proposed 2027 rate increase would allow FIIP to rebuild staffing levels, pay for increased pumping costs, account for rising inflation and construction costs, and replenish its depleted reserve account for emergencies. Achieving a higher level of service by efficiently carrying out infrastructure repairs and maintenance requires recruitment and retention of experienced and qualified personnel. Historically, BIA tempered O&M rates to demonstrate sensitivity to the economic impact on water users, but that practice resulted in rate deficiencies at some projects including FIIP. FIIP's O&M rates have not kept up with costs, resulting in a growing backlog of deferred maintenance. The proposed assessment increases have been projected and noticed for several years to ensure FIIP can keep up with these financial demands and maintain reliable service for water users.

Comment: Two commentors object to the proposed $220 parcel minimum charge because they do not use water service from FIIP.

Response: 5 U.S.C. 301, the Act of August 14, 1914 (38 Stat. 583; 25 U.S.C. 385), and FIIP-specific statutes authorize the Secretary to fix operation and maintenance charges for irrigable lands within FIIP. The Secretary has in turn delegated this authority to the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs under part 209, chapter 8.1A, of the Department of the Interior's Departmental Manual. Land classification is a process by which land is surveyed and classified as irrigable or non-irrigable, and irrigable means lands to which water for irrigation purposes can be delivered, upon request, within a reasonable amount of time (Pub. L. 66–141 (41 Stat. 409), Feb. 14, 1920). A landowner's failure to provide internal ditches, perform minor leveling, or remove vegetation are not considered factors that alter classification of lands as irrigable or prevent irrigation or assessment of FIIP lands.

FIIP's land tracts were originally authorized to be between 40 and 160 acre parcels (Pub. L. 58–159 (33 Stat. 302), Apr. 23, 1904; Pub. L. 60–156 (35 Stat. 444, 448–50), May 29, 1908). Each tract with no less than 40 acres is served by a farm turnout structure designed to deliver water via gravity flow from a ditch. Over time, subdivision of tracts has resulted in an approximately 60% increase in the total number of FIIP assessable tracts, with a significant portion now less than 4.78 acres in size. The increased number of tracts requires greater staff time for administrative and operational activities, including updating and maintaining land records, processing annual O&M billings, revenue collection, taking and adjusting water orders, accounting of water deliveries, resolving water issues, responding to user inquiries or complaints, permitting, and addressing encroachment. From 2015 through 2025, FIIP's minimum charge remained $75 annually and did not keep up with actual expenses for servicing these smaller tracts. When rates are delayed, subsequent increases will necessarily be larger. The proposed $220 minimum charge is structured to cover increased operational and administrative costs associated with serving these smaller tracts.

Irrigators do not have to pay their annual operation and maintenance assessment if they are granted an Annual Assessment Waiver or the land is re-designated as Temporarily or Permanently Non-Assessable. An annual assessment waiver will be granted if our facilities are not capable of delivering any water to your land for the entire year. 25 CFR 171.705–710. Inadequate water supply due to natural conditions or climate is not justification for an annual assessment waiver. The Annual Assessment Waiver Application is available at *https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/media_document/1076-0141_bia-dwp-irr-103-assessment-waiver_exp-04-30-29_508.pdf.* If landowners believe their lands cannot be cultivated profitably due to a present lack of water supply, proper drainage facilities, or need of additional construction work, they can apply to have their lands declared temporarily non-assessable for up to 5 years (25 U.S.C. 389 *et seq*). If landowners believe their lands are permanently non-assessable, they may apply for a Permanently Non-Assessable designation (25 U.S.C. 389b *et seq*). Changed land use, however, is not sufficient reason to re-designate land to permanently non-assessable. A permanent change in land status may reduce the value of the property and diminish resale value as well as potentially impact water rights. The Land Classification/Designation application is available at *https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/media_document/1076-0141_bia-dwp-irr-105_land-classification-and-designation-application_exp-04-30-29_508.pdf.*

Comment: Two commentors object to the rate increase because they depend on overflow from ditches to flood irrigate their property and have not received sufficient overflow in the past two years. One of these commentors objects to an across-the-board rate increase because of inequity in water deliveries and receiving poorer water service than other parts of the FIIP.

Response: The quantity of water provided to each tract is determined by the irrigator's request, the legal entitlement, and the available water supply in accordance with 25 CFR 171.205. FIIP's mission is to deliver water equitably to all farm units at their respective designated turnout. Once water passes through the farm turnout, the responsibility for means and methods of irrigation rests solely with the irrigator. It is up to each irrigator to manage how that irrigation water is applied to their land for effective irrigation.

Future water shortages may exist due to climatic conditions, and hydrology varies across the Project. However, inadequate water supply due to natural conditions or climate is not justification for the BIA to delay an assessment increase. The costs BIA assesses for O&M—covering personnel, equipment, maintenance, rehabilitation, *etc.*—persist regardless of drought conditions. *See* 25 CFR 171.500 and 25 CFR 171.705.

Comment: Three commentors express concerns over FIIP's low staffing levels and inadequacy of emergency hires. Commentors believe FIIP has excess funds due to staffing shortages and recommend reducing the rate increase until the hiring freeze is lifted and FIIP is approved to fill vacancies.

Response: For the last several summers, FIIP has relied on Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) staff—referred to as ''emergency hires''—to assist with carrying out essential irrigation operations, administrative functions, and maintenance activities. FIIP provides CSKT with funding to hire irrigation staff through CSKT's self-governance compact with BIA, whereby Intergovernmental Personnel Act agreements may be entered into for each employee. As of June 2026, FIIP operates with 26 full-time BIA employees and 14 CSKT staff for a total current staff level of 40 employees. Around 50% of the CSKT staff are retired BIA personnel, some with decades of FIIP experience and expertise. These CSKT staff are tremendously helpful, and without them BIA may not be able to deliver water to all FIIP irrigators. Even though staffing levels have fallen below ideal thresholds, FIIP has maintained full operational continuity as a result of dedicated personnel working overtime, soliciting contractors to do work BIA previously performed, and assuming extra administrative work to support land records management, billing, revenue collection, water delivery, issue resolution, permitting, and encroachment responses.

BIA is no longer subject to the federal hiring freeze in place for most of 2025. Starting with fiscal year 2026, BIA must submit an Annual Staffing Plan to OPM and the White House's Office of Management and Budget. Exec. Order No. 14356 (Oct. 15, 2025). A few of FIIP's requested priority positions have been approved to hire in fiscal year 2026 and will be advertised this summer until filled. Additional FIIP positions may be approved for hiring in the fourth quarter of 2026. As explained above, BIA was recently authorized to recruit and directly appoint qualified individuals into the competitive service who are certified as maintaining a permanent and exclusive residence in the vicinity of the field unit, into any position at or below grades GS–9 (Pub. L. 119–74, section 127 (Jan. 23, 2026)). We are optimistic this new authority will expedite FIIP's hiring process.

The FIIP 2027 budget includes funding for its current 40 staff plus 8 vacant positions including a Project Manager, Civil Engineering Technician, Supervisory Civil Engineer, GIS Specialist, Hydrologist/Fish Biologist, Irrigation System Operator, Utility Systems Operator, and Maintenance Worker. The 2027 budget does not include funding for 6 vacant positions in the Project's organizational chart. The 2027 budget and assessment rate will allow BIA to hire necessary personnel to improve irrigation service and address maintenance across the Project. While BIA has not yet submitted its fiscal year 2027 Annual Staffing Plan, BIA anticipates requesting approval to hire the 8 funded vacant FIIP positions as well as the positions temporarily filled by CSKT staff. Any unspent personnel funds will be allocated to FIIP's emergency, sinking, and rehabilitation and replacement funds.

FIIP did not have any carryover funds in 2025. BIA's budget (prepared two years in advance) estimated personnel costs of $3.21 million and actual personnel costs was $3.16 million. The unspent portion allowed FIIP to purchase equipment. Because FIIP's total 2025 expenses exceeded revenue, FIIP used reserve funds to cover the balance of expenses. Given the same expenses and level of service will cost more in 2027, FIIP's rate assessment increase is necessary.

Does this notice affect me?

This notice affects you if you own or lease land within the assessable acreage of one of our irrigation projects or if you have a carriage agreement with one of our irrigation projects.

Where can I get information on the regulatory and legal citations in this notice?

You can contact the appropriate office(s) stated in the tables for the irrigation project that serves you, or you can use the internet site for the Government Publishing Office at *www.gpo.gov.*

What authorizes you to issue this notice?

Our authority to issue this notice is vested in the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) by 5 U.S.C. 301 and the Act of August 14, 1914 (38 Stat. 583; 25 U.S.C. 385). The Secretary has in turn delegated this authority to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs under part 209, chapter 8.1A, of the Department of the Interior's Departmental Manual.

Whom can I contact for further information?

The following tables are the regional and project/agency contacts for our irrigation facilities.

Northwest Region Contacts	
Kurt Fredenburg, Acting Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Regional Office, 911 NE 11th Avenue, Portland, OR 97232–4169. Telephone: (505) 220–9252.	
Flathead Indian Irrigation Project	Gene "Bear" Hughes, Acting Superintendent, Dominick Belcourt, Acting Irrigation Project Manager, 220 Project Drive, St. Ignatius, MT 59865. Telephones: Superintendent (406) 675–2700; Irrigation Project Manager (406) 745–2661.
Fort Hall Irrigation Project	Tim Gardner, Acting Irrigation Project Manager, 36 Bannock Avenue, Fort Hall, ID 83203–0220. Telephone: (208) 238–1992.
Wapato Irrigation Project	Pete Plant, Project Administrator, 413 South Camas Avenue, Wapato, WA 98951–0220. Telephone: (509) 877–3155.

Rocky Mountain Region Contacts	
Jodi Camrud, Acting Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, 2021 4th Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101. Telephone: (406) 247–7943.	
Blackfeet Irrigation Project	Kenneth Bird, Superintendent, Edward Chief All Over, Acting Irrigation Project Manager, P.O. Box 880, Browning, MT 59417. Telephones: Superintendent (406) 338–7544; Irrigation Project Manager (406) 338–7519.
Crow Irrigation Project	Harold "Jess" Brien, Superintendent, Richard Taptto, Acting Irrigation Project Manager (BIA), (Project O&M performed by Water Users Association), P.O. Box 69, Crow Agency, MT 59022. Telephones: Superintendent (406) 638–2672; Acting Irrigation Project Manager (406) 698–5631.
Fort Belknap Irrigation Project	Mark Azure, Superintendent, Richard Taptto, Acting Irrigation Project Manager (BIA), (Project O&M contracted to Tribes under Pub. L. 93–638),158 Tribal Way, Suite B, Harlem, MT 59526. Telephones: Superintendent (406) 353–2901; Irrigation Project Manager, Tribal Office (406) 353–8454.
Fort Peck Irrigation Project	Megan Gourneau, Superintendent, Richard Taptto, Acting Irrigation Project Manager (BIA), (Project O&M performed by Fort Peck Water Users Association), P.O. Box 637, Poplar, MT 59255. Telephones: Superintendent (406) 768–5312; Acting Irrigation Project Manager (406) 698–5631.

Wind River Irrigation Project	Antonio Pingree, Superintendent, Richard Taptto, Acting Irrigation Project Manager (BIA), (Project O&M for Little Wind, Johnstown, and Lefthand Units contracted to Tribes under Pub. L. 93–638; Upper Wind Units O&M performed by A Canal, and Crowheart Water Users Associations), P.O. Box 158, Fort Washakie, WY 82514. Telephones: Superintendent (307) 332–7810; Acting Irrigation Project Manager (406) 698–5631.
Southwest Region Contacts	
Dan Galvin, Acting Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Southwest Regional Office, 1001 Indian School Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104. Telephone: (505) 563–3100.	
Pine River Irrigation Project	Priscilla Bancroft, Superintendent, Vickie Begay, Irrigation Project Manager, P.O. Box 315, Ignacio, CO 81137–0315. Telephones: Superintendent (970) 200–8613; Irrigation Project Manager (970) 236–4161.
Western Region Contacts	
Jessie Durham, Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Regional Office, 2600 North Central Avenue, 4th Floor Mailroom, Phoenix, AZ 85004. Telephone: (480) 535–1552.	
Colorado River Irrigation Project	Davetta Ameelyenah, Superintendent, Irrigation Project Manager (Vacant), (Portions of Project O&M contracted to Colorado River Indian Tribes under Pub. L. 93–638), 12124 1st Avenue, Parker, AZ 85344. Telephones: Superintendent (928) 669–7111; Irrigation Project Manager (928) 662–4392; Water Resources/Irrigation Department of Colorado River Indian Tribes (928) 669–1312.
Duck Valley Irrigation Project	Jane Jackson-Bear,Superintendent, (Project O&M compacted to Shoshone-Paiute Tribes under Pub. L. 93–638), 2719 Argent Avenue, Suite 4, Gateway Plaza, Elko, NV 89801. Telephones: Superintendent (775) 738–5165; Tribal Office (208) 759–3100.
Yuma Project, Indian Unit	Davetta Ameelyenah, Acting Superintendent, BOR owns the Project and is responsible for O&M), 256 South Second Avenue, Suite D, Yuma, AZ 85364. Telephones: Superintendent (928) 782–1202; BOR Area Office Manager (928) 343–8100.
San Carlos Irrigation Project (Indian Works and Joint Works).	Cathy Wilson, Acting General Manager, Irrigation and Utility Services (BIA), Kyle Varvel, Civil Engineer, Irrigation Division (BIA), (Portions of Indian Works O&M compacted to Gila River Indian Community under Pub. L. 93–638; Joint Control Board is responsible for portions of Joint Works maintenance pursuant to Gila River Indian Community Water Rights Settlement Act of 2004, 118 Stat. 3499), 13805 North Arizona Boulevard, Coolidge, AZ 85128. Telephones: General Manager (480) 744–5368; Civil Engineer (520) 562–3372; Gila River Indian Irrigation & Drainage District (520) 562–6720; Joint Control Board (520) 562–9760, (520) 723–5408.
Uintah Irrigation Project	Seann Woster, Acting Superintendent, Sam Johnson, Irrigation System Manager, (Project O&M performed by Uintah Indian Irrigation Project Operation and Maintenance Company), P.O. Box 130, Fort Duchesne, UT 84026. Telephones: Superintendent (435) 722–4300; Uintah Indian Irrigation Operation and Maintenance Company (435) 724–5200.
Walker River Irrigation Project	James Gatzke, Acting Superintendent, 311 East Washington Street, Carson City, NV 89701. Telephone: (775) 887–3500.

What irrigation assessments or charges are adjusted by this notice?

The rate table below contains final rates for the 2026 and 2027 calendar years for all irrigation projects where we recover costs of administering, operating, maintaining, and rehabilitating them. An asterisk immediately following the rate category notes irrigation projects where 2026 rates are different from the 2027 rates.

Project name	Rate category	Final 2026 rate	Final 2027 rate
Northwest Region Rate Table			
Flathead Irrigation Project (See Note #1)	Basic per acre—A *	$39.00	$46.00
	Basic per acre—B *	19.50	23.00
	Minimum Charge per tract *	200.00	220.00
Fort Hall Irrigation Project	Basic per acre *	68.00	68.50
	Minimum Charge per tract *	44.50	45.00
Fort Hall Irrigation Project—Minor Units	Basic per acre *	46.50	47.50
	Minimum Charge per tract *	44.50	45.00
Fort Hall Irrigation Project—Michaud Unit	Basic per acre *	77.50	78.50
	Pressure per acre *	120.00	122.00
	Minimum Charge per tract *	44.50	45.00
Wapato Irrigation Project—Toppenish/Simcoe Units	Minimum Charge per bill *	28.00	28.50
	Basic per acre *	28.00	28.50
Wapato Irrigation Project—Ahtanum Units	Minimum Charge per bill *	35.00	36.50
	Basic per acre *	35.00	36.50
Wapato Irrigation Project—Satus Unit	Minimum Charge per bill *	100.00	120.00
	"A" Basic per acre *	86.00	89.00
	"B" Basic per acre *	92.00	95.00
Wapato Irrigation Project—Additional Works	Minimum Charge per bill *	100.00	120.00
	Basic per acre *	87.00	90.00
Wapato Irrigation Project—Water Rental	Minimum Charge per bill *	100.00	120.00

Project name	Rate category	Final 2026 rate	Final 2027 rate
	Basic per acre *	100.00	125.00
Rocky Mountain Region Rate Table			
Blackfeet Irrigation Project	Basic-per acre	22.00	22.00
Crow Irrigation Project—Willow Creek O&M (includes Agency, Lodge Grass #1, Lodge Grass #2, Reno, Upper Little Horn, and Forty Mile Units).	Basic-per acre	34.00	34.00
Crow Irrigation Project—All Others (includes Bighorn, Soap Creek, and Pryor Units).	Basic-per acre	34.00	34.00
Two Leggins Irrigation District Unit—Servicing Crow Trust lands (See Note #2).	Basic-per acre	17.00	(+)
Two Leggins Drainage District—Servicing Crow Trust lands (See Note #2).	Basic-per acre	5.00	(+)
Fort Belknap Irrigation Project	Basic-per acre	25.00	25.00
Fort Peck Irrigation Project	Basic-per acre	35.00	35.00
Wind River Irrigation Project—Units 2, 3 and 4	Basic-per acre	28.00	28.00
Wind River Irrigation Project—Unit 6	Basic-per acre	28.00	28.00
LeClair Irrigation District—Servicing Wind River Trust lands (See Note #3).	Basic-per acre	47.00	(+)
Wind River Irrigation Project—Crow Heart Unit	Basic-per acre	17.50	17.50
Wind River Irrigation Project—A Canal Unit	Basic-per acre	17.50	17.50
Riverton Valley Irrigation District—Servicing Wind River Trust lands (See Note #3).	Basic-per acre	30.65	(+)
Southwest Region Rate Table			
Pine River Irrigation Project (See Note #4)	Minimum Charge per tract .	75.00	75.00
Basic-per acre *	24.50	25.00	
Western Region Rate Table			
Colorado River Irrigation Project	Basic per acre up to 5.75 acre-feet *	85.00	93.00
	Excess Water per acre-foot over 5.75 acre-feet.	18.00	18.00
Duck Valley Irrigation Project	Basic per acre *	12.00	13.00
Yuma Project, Indian Unit (See Note #5)	Basic per acre up to 5.0 acre-feet	222.50	(+)
	Excess Water per acre-foot over 5.0 acre-feet	35.00	(+)
	Basic per acre up to 5.0 acre-feet (Ranch 5)	222.50	(+)

San Carlos Irrigation Project (Joint Works) (See Note #6).	Basic per acre *		28.00	24.00
	Final 2027 Construction Water Rate Schedule:			
		Off project construction	On project construction—gravity water	On Project construction—pump water
	Administrative Fee	300.00	300.00	300.00
	Usage Fee	250.00 per month	No Fee	100.00 per acre foot
	Excess Water Rate †	5.00 per 1,000 gal.	No Charge	No Charge

Project name	Rate category	Final 2026 rate	Final 2027 rate
San Carlos Irrigation Project (Indian Works) (See Note #7)	Basic per acre *	98.85	94.85
Uintah Irrigation Project	Basic per acre	25.00	25.00
	Minimum Bill	25.00	25.00
Walker River Irrigation Project	Basic per acre *	32.00	34.00

* Notes irrigation projects where rates are adjusted.
+ These rates have not yet been determined.
† The excess water rate applies to all water used in excess of 50,000 gallons in any one month.

Note #1: The Minimum Charge per tract for Flathead Irrigation Project for 2027 will apply to parcels sized 4.78 acres or smaller.

Note #2: The O&M rates for Two Leggins Irrigation District Unit and Two Leggins Drainage District pertain to Trust lands serviced by each respective irrigation district. The Two Leggins Irrigation District Unit and Two Leggins Drainage District are privately owned and operated, co-located with the BIA Crow Irrigation Project. The annual O&M rates are determined by the districts annually. BIA is retracting the proposed 2027 rates because the final budgets for 2027 have not yet been determined by the districts.

Note #3: The O&M rates for LeClair Irrigation District and Riverton Valley Irrigation District apply to Trust lands serviced by each irrigation district. The districts are privately owned and operated, co-located with the BIA Wind River Irrigation Project. The annual O&M rates are determined by the LeClair and Riverton Valley Irrigation Districts, respectively. BIA is retracting the proposed 2027 rates for these two districts because the final budgets for 2027 rates have not yet been determined.

Note #4: The Minimum Charge per tract for Pine River Irrigation Project for 2027 will apply to any parcel with an assessment under $75.00, whereby a flat fee of $75.00 will be charged.

Note #5: The O&M rate for the Yuma Project, Indian Unit has two components. The first component of the O&M rate is established by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the owner and operator of the Project; the BOR rate is $218 for 2026 but has not been established for 2027. The second component of the O&M rate is established by BIA to cover administrative costs, which includes billing and collections for the Project. The Final 2026 BIA rate component is $4.50 per acre. The Final 2027 BIA rate component is $4.50 per acre.

Note #6: The Construction Water Rate Schedule identifies fees assessed for use of irrigation water for non-irrigation purposes.

Note #7: The O&M rate for the San Carlos Irrigation Project—Indian Works has three components. The first component is established by BIA San Carlos Irrigation Project—Indian Works; the final 2026 rate is $55.85 per acre and the Final 2027 rate is $55.85. The second component is established by BIA San Carlos Irrigation Project—Joint Works; the final 2026 rate is $28.00 per acre and the 2027 Final rate is $24.00. The third component is established by the San Carlos Irrigation Project Joint Control Board (comprised of representatives from the Gila River Indian Community and the San Carlos Irrigation and Drainage District); the 2026 and 2027 rate is $15.00 per acre.

Consultation and Coordination With Tribal Governments (Executive Order 13175)

The Department of the Interior strives to strengthen its government-to-government relationship with Indian Tribes through a commitment to consultation with Indian Tribes and recognition of their right to self-governance and Tribal sovereignty. We have evaluated this notice under the Department's consultation policy and under the criteria of Executive Order 13175 and have determined there to be substantial direct effects on federally recognized Tribes because the irrigation projects are located on or associated with Indian reservations. To fulfill its consultation responsibility to Tribes and Tribal organizations, BIA communicates, coordinates, and consults on a continuing basis with these entities on issues of water delivery, water availability, and costs of administration, operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of projects that concern them. This is accomplished at the individual irrigation project by project, agency, and regional representatives, as appropriate, in accordance with local protocol and procedures. This notice is one component of our overall coordination and consultation process to provide notice to, and request comments from, these entities when we adjust irrigation assessment rates.

Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use (Executive Order 13211)

These rate adjustments are not a significant energy action under the definition in Executive Order 13211. A statement of energy effects is not required.

Regulatory Planning and Review (Executive Order 12866)

These rate adjustments are not a significant regulatory action and do not need to be reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

These rate adjustments are not a rule for the purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act because they establish "a rule of particular applicability relating to rates." 5 U.S.C. 601(2).

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995

These rate adjustments do not impose an unfunded mandate on State, local, or Tribal governments in the aggregate, or on the private sector, of more than $130 million per year. They do not have a significant or unique effect on State, local, or Tribal governments or the private sector. Therefore, the Department is not required to prepare a statement containing the information required by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (2 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Takings (Executive Order 12630)

These rate adjustments do not effect a taking of private property or otherwise have "takings" implications under Executive Order 12630. The rate adjustments do not deprive the public, State, or local governments of rights or property.

Federalism (Executive Order 13132)

Under the criteria in section 1 of Executive Order 13132, these rate adjustments do not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a federalism summary impact statement because they will not affect the States, the relationship between the national government and the States, or the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. A federalism summary impact statement is not required.

Civil Justice Reform (Executive Order 12988)

This notice complies with the requirements of Executive Order 12988. Specifically, in issuing this notice, the Department has taken the necessary steps to eliminate drafting errors and ambiguity, minimize potential litigation, and provide a clear legal standard for affected conduct as required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

These rate adjustments do not affect the collections of information which have been approved by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The OMB Control Number is 1076–0141 and expires April 30, 2029.

National Environmental Policy Act

The Department has determined that these rate adjustments do not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. A detailed statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required because the rate adjustments are of an administrative, financial, legal, technical, or procedural nature. (For further information *see* 43 CFR 46.210(i)). We have also determined that the rate adjustments would not involve any of the extraordinary circumstances listed in 43 CFR 46.215 that would require further analysis under NEPA.

William Henry Kirkland III,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

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Notice of Public Meetings of the Advisory Board for Exceptional Children

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is publishing this notice to announce that the Advisory Board for Exceptional Children (Advisory Board) will meet as indicated below. The purpose of the meetings is to meet the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004