The Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) Board of Directors’ Workshop and Field Inspection of the Saroni Canal was held on July 27, 2015. The workshop was called to order at 9:05 AM at the Parking Lot of the Wellington Post Office, 2818 Hwy 208, Wellington, Nevada by President Jim Snyder.

Present were:

Jim SNYDER President

David GIORGI Vice President

Richard NUTI Treasurer

Dennis ACCIARI Director

David LITTLE Director

Bridget BANTA Secretary

Robert BRYAN General Manager

Jim SHAW Water Master

Public present were:

Steve Tomac Greg Hunewill Marianne Leinassar

Kris Leinassar Emily Fulstone Steve Fulstone

Paula Barstow Bill Conlin Peter Fenili

Gary Berrington Toni Garms Gary Garms

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**ROLL CALL**

President Jim Snyder determined all board members present.

**WORKSHOP & FIELD INSPECTION INTRODUCTION**

GM BRYAN went over the workshop set for the day ahead. He encouraged all Saroni Canal users to point out areas of each persons’ concern to the board members at each location.

**FIELD INSPECTION:**

1. **Automatic head gates downstream of the diversion works in Hoye Canyon.**

GM BRYAN advised with was the first automated site fully functioning in the district. It is solar powered and very low maintenance. Water Master Shaw requested to know if the water coming into the head gates measured prior to entering the head gates. GM BRYAN advised it was measured prior to and after via sensors in the flume. This controls the height of the gate. Director LITTLE asked how much this project cost and who paid for it. GM BRYAN advised it was $220,000 and was paid by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) grant. The ditch company owns the gates. President SNYDER asked if there were any problems they have encountered in which GM BRYAN has learned from. GM BRYAN advised there are some sediment issues, and plans are in place to have more removal of sediment through maintenance. The gates check for any kind of obstruction every 3 minutes. If there is any kind of obstruction or issue with the flow of water, an alarm goes off.

1. **Portions of Saroni Canal in Hoye Canyon which are concrete, with stops at flood overpasses and areas of prior canal breaks.**

GM BRYAN stopped at several locations where there was evidence of loose gravel sloughing into cement lined areas of the Saroni. There was gravel and large rocks that had fallen into the canal. The cement was poured in the early 50’s. Steven FULSTONE informed the board members the sediment comes down and the ditch eventually blows out. Peter FENILI advised the overpasses are not being maintained and that causes flash flood hazards as well. In 2002 there was a breach and no one was able to get up the canyon to shut the water off. There was evidence of large amounts of sediment on the flood bridge. Steven FULSTONE advised this sediment is just from this year. The flood bridges were cleaned out last year. He advised they usually rent a bobcat to clean the flood bridges.

GM BRYAN continued to the asphalt liner behind Mr. Burns’ property. The liner was put in in 1997 and this was a specific area of concern. Peter FENILI comment the ledge has collapsed over time and Burns’ property was in danger if a breach were to occur again. Steven FULSTONE requested to know what to do to improve this portion of the Saroni. Peter FENILI suggested 200-300 ft. of pipe to put in that section. This would protect Burns’ property. Flood pass #2 did not have as much debris, but it still needs to be cleaned out and maintained. The cutback in the mountain was sprayed in 2012 and is overgrown again. It is hard to get back into the cutback area to spray. Gary BERRINGTON suggested people walking through the cutback and spraying by hand.

1. **Wellington Foothills portion, with stops at flood overpasses and areas of prior canal breaks.**

GM BRYAN continued to the flood passes. One of the passes has been burned. There are burn holes in it and the boards should be replaced. Gary GARMS asked about tree removal along this section. He is concerned the trees are soaking up water and contributing to the shrink. GM BRYAN advised he is leery to move the trees because he believes the roots may be helping with stability to the side of the mountain. Peter FENILI showed the board the area of seepage and says it has been seeping for approximately 15 years. It may be only a matter of time before the canal walls lose its stability and a breach occurs. Director GIORGI requested to know who was liable if a breach did occur. GM BRYAN advised he believes it is WRID. Legal is working on going over all the insurance policies to ensure the Saroni is covered. Marianne LEINASSAR advised maintenance is very important to complete on a yearly basis. Toni GARMS requested to see records of spraying and de-mossing at the next meeting. GM BRYAN stated he would try to get that information prepared for the next meeting. Steven FULSTONE advised the board sent a letter to Mr. Oxsen regarding cutting into the bank of the Saroni without prior authorization from WRID. He advised the bank has not been fixed and maybe it was time to send another letter.

1. **Wellington Cut-Off through Canal Road to the existing Long Crested Weir**

GM BRYAN advised the long-crested weir was put in in 2010. Stuart Styles is scheduled to come look at the canal including this portion of the long-crested weir. Gary GARMS advised it would be important to get an abatement program and get on a schedule. Toni GARMS suggested to bid out construction for the canal and possibly maintain with staff WRID currently has. GM BRYAN advised the Saroni does not take precedence over everyone else in the district. Everyone is stretched out and there are only so many staff available to provide maintenance to all the ditches. Marianne LEINASSAR asked why, if they raised the assessments, can the work not get done. GM BRYAN reminded everyone the water needs to be turned off to do the maintenance. Gary BERRINGTON commented on the rocks that have fallen throughout the canal and advised it was embarrassing and there was no reason for them to just sit in the canal causing damage. Peter FENILI stated he did not feel it was the manager’s fault. He faulted the board of directors because the manager has to do what the board of directors instructs him to do. Director LITTLE advised the advisory board for the Saroni Canal needs to bring the information and what they want to the WRID Board. Toni GARMS replied to Director LITTLE, stating he should be just as concerned as the people who built the ditch because WRID owns the Canal.

1. **Desert Creek flood overpass**

GM BRYAN stopped at the Desert Creek flood overpass. Steven FULSTONE stated it was very close to overflowing because of the recent rains. It currently needs to be cleaned out again. This overpass is imperative it stays clean as well. The last time the overpass breached, Central was flooded.

1. **Lateral A & B**

Shrink from one measuring device to another is 13%. There are 3 users below the flume. Steven FULSTONE explained ITRC designed the takeout. The Nuti/Weaver takeout has two different measuring devices with 2 different elevations. Possible piping from flume to Nuti/Fenili may help with the water loss. Peter FENILI commented that before any decisions are made for maintenance and any other projects, the board needs to decide whether Lateral A and B belong to the Saroni Canal or not. That is the most important question that needs to be answered. He also commented that the engineer said the pipe would not work at this location. Director LITTLE requested to know the reason pipe was not acceptable per the engineer. GM BRYAN advised the ground just needed to be compacted correctly if pipe was to be used. Director NUTI stated everyone needs to forget the improvements…are Lateral A & B a part of the Saroni or not. That is the question at hand that needs to be answered. He also said himself and FENILI would be willing to go in together at Lateral A and he would abandon his personal ditch to get a better head when ordering water. GM BRYAN finished at Lateral B at the replugal flume. This gate has Berrington, Heller and Garms. The flume is in bad shape along with the cement cracking.

Everyone reassembled in the Smith Valley Fire Protection District Fire House Parking Lot at 1:30 pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Steven FULSTONE advised the committee would be meeting again to identify and vote on improvement projects. The committee would get the recommendations back to the board. GM BRYAN advised Stuart Styles will be here the week of the 10th of August. He will be scheduling a day to have him go through the canal and make his recommendations. GM BRYAN also stated the district will continue doing the day-to-day maintenance and operations, however the major projects will have to wait.

Director LITTLE made a motion to adjourn the workshop. Director NUTI seconded the motion. No discussion was presented. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

President SNYDER adjourned the meeting at 1:33 pm.