

(b) Relieves us from any future costs incurred for maintaining the structure;

(c) Describes what is granted by us and accepted by you; and

(d) Provides that if you do not regularly use a structure for a period of time that we have determined, or you do not properly maintain and rehabilitate the structure, we will notify you in writing that:

(1) You must either remove it or correct any unsafe condition;

(2) If you do not comply with our notice, we may remove the structure and you must reimburse us our costs; and

(3) We may modify, close, or remove your structure without notice due to an urgency we have identified.

§ 171.410 Can I install a fence on a BIA irrigation project?

Yes. Fences are considered structures and may be installed in compliance with § 171.405.

§ 171.415 Can I place an obstruction on a BIA irrigation project?

No. You may not place obstructions on BIA irrigation projects.

(a) If you do so, we will notify you in writing that you must remove it.

(b) If you do not remove your obstruction in compliance with our notice, we will remove it and we will bill you for our costs.

(c) We can remove your obstruction without notice because of an urgency we have identified.

§ 171.420 Can I dispose of sewage, trash, or other refuse on a BIA irrigation project?

No. Sewage, trash, or other refuse are considered obstructions and must be removed in accordance with § 171.415.

Subpart E—Financial Matters: Assessments, Billing, and Collections

§ 171.500 How does BIA determine the annual operation and maintenance assessment rate for the irrigation facility servicing my farm unit?

(a) We calculate the annual operation and maintenance assessment rate by estimating the following annual costs and then dividing by the total assessable acres for your irrigation facility:

(1) Personnel salary and benefits for the facility engineer/manager and employees under their management or control;

(2) Materials and supplies;

(3) Vehicle and equipment repairs;

(4) Equipment costs, including lease fees;

(5) Depreciation;

(6) Acquisition costs;

(7) Maintenance of a reserve fund available for contingencies or emergency costs needed for the reliable operation of the irrigation facility infrastructure;

(8) Maintenance of a vehicle and heavy equipment replacement fund;

(9) Systematic rehabilitation and replacement of project facilities;

(10) Contingencies for unknown costs and omitted budget items; and

(11) Other costs we determine necessary to properly perform the activities and functions characteristic of an irrigation facility.

(b) Annual operation and maintenance assessment rates may be lowered through the exercise of our discretion when items listed in (a) of this section are adjusted pursuant to our authority under 25 U.S.C. 385, 386a and 389.

(c) If you subdivide your farm unit, you may be subject to a higher annual operation and maintenance assessment rate, which we publish annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(d) At projects where supplemental water is available, the calculation of your annual operation and maintenance assessment rate may take into consideration the total estimated annual amount to be collected for supplemental water deliveries.

§ 171.505 How does BIA calculate my annual operation and maintenance assessment?

(a) We calculate your annual operation and maintenance assessment by multiplying the total assessable acres of your land within the service area of our irrigation facility by the annual operation and maintenance assessment rate we establish for that facility.

(b) We will not assess lands that have been re-classified as either permanently non-assessable (PNA) or temporarily non-assessable (TNA) or lands

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that have been granted an Annual Assessment Waiver.

(c) If your lands are under an approved Incentive Agreement, we may waive your assessment as described in the Incentive Agreement (See § 171.610).

(d) Some irrigation facilities may charge a minimum operation and maintenance assessment. If the irrigation facility serving your farm unit charges a minimum operation and maintenance assessment that is more than your assessment calculated by the method described in subpart (a) of this section, you will be charged the minimum operation and maintenance assessment. We provide public notice of any minimum operation and maintenance assessments annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER (See § 171.565).

§ 171.510 How does BIA calculate my annual operation and maintenance assessment if supplemental water is available on the irrigation facility servicing my farm unit?

(a) For projects where supplemental water is available, and you request and receive supplemental water, your assessment will include two components: a base rate, which is for your per-acre water duty delivered to your farm unit; and a supplemental water rate, which is for water delivered to your farm unit in addition to your per-acre water duty.

(b) We publish base and supplemental water rates annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The base and supplemental water rates are established to recover the costs identified in section 171.500(a) of this subpart.

(c) If your project has established a supplemental water rate, and you request and receive supplemental water, we will calculate your total annual operation and maintenance assessment by adding the following two totals:

(1) The total assessable acres of your land within the service area of our irrigation facility multiplied by the annual operation and maintenance assessment rate we establish for that facility; and

(2) The actual quantity of supplemental water you request and we agree to deliver (in acre-feet) times the supplemental water rate established for that facility.

§ 171.515 Who will BIA bill?

(a) We will bill the landowner, unless:

(1) The land is leased under a lease approved by us, in which case we will bill the lessee, or

(2) The landowner(s) is represented by a representative organization that collects annual operation and maintenance assessments on behalf of its members and the representative organization makes a direct payment to us on your behalf.

(b) If you own or lease assessable lands within a BIA irrigation facility, you will be billed for annual operation and maintenance assessments, whether you request water or not, unless otherwise specified in § 171.505(b).

§ 171.520 How will I receive my bill and when do I pay it?

(a) You will receive your bill in the mail at the address of record you provide us.

(b) You should pay your bill no later than the due date stated on your bill.

(c) You will not receive a bill for supplemental water. You must pay us in advance at the supplemental water rate established for you project published annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

§ 171.525 How do I pay my bill?

(a) You can pay your bill by:

(1) Personally going to the local office of the irrigation facility authorized to receive your payment during normal business hours;

(2) Depositing your payment in an authorized drop box, if available, at the local office of the irrigation facility; or

(3) Mailing your payment to the address indicated on your bill.

(b) Your payment must be in the form of:

(1) Check or money order in the mail or authorized drop box; or

(2) Cash, check, or money order if you pay in person.

§ 171.530 What information must I provide BIA for billing purposes?

We must obtain certain information from you to ensure we can properly bill, collect, deposit, and account for money you owe the United States. At a minimum, this information is:

(a) Your full legal name;

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- (b) Your correct mailing address; and
- (c) Your taxpayer identifying number.

§ 171.535 Why is BIA collecting this information from me?

(a) As part of doing business with you, we must collect enough information from you to properly bill and service your account.

(b) We are required to collect your taxpayer identifying number under the authority of, and as prescribed in, the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, Public Law 104-134 (110 Stat. 1321-364).

§ 171.540 What can happen if I do not provide this information?

We will not provide you irrigation service.

§ 171.545 What can happen if I don't pay my bill on time?

(a) We will not provide you irrigation service until:

(1) Your bill is paid; or

(2) You make arrangement for payment pursuant to § 171.550 of this part.

(b) If you do not pay your bill prior to the close of business on the 30th day after the due date, we consider your bill past due, send you a notice, and assess you the following:

(1) Interest, as required by 31 U.S.C. 3717. Interest will accrue from the original due date stated on your bill.

(2) An administrative fee, as required by 31 CFR 901.9.

(c) If you do not pay your bill prior to the close of business of the 90th day after the due date, we will assess you a penalty, as required by 31 CFR 901.9(d). Penalties will accrue from the original due date stated on your bill.

(d) We will forward your past due bill to the United States Treasury no later than 180 days after the original due date, as required by 31 CFR 901.1, "Aggressive agency collection activity."

§ 171.550 Can I arrange a Payment Plan if I cannot pay the full amount due?

We may approve a Payment Plan if:

(a) You are a landowner and your land is not leased;

(b) You certify that you are financially unable to make a lump sum payment;

(c) You provide additional information we request, which may include information identified in 31 CFR 901.8, "Collection in installments"; and

(d) You sign our Payment Plan containing terms and conditions we specify.

§ 171.555 What additional costs will I incur if I am granted a Payment Plan?

You will incur the following costs:

(a) An administrative fee to process your Payment Plan, as required by 31 CFR 901.9.

(b) Interest, accrued on your unpaid balance, in accordance with § 171.545.

§ 171.560 What if I fail to make payments as specified in my Payment Plan?

(a) We will discontinue irrigation service until your bill is paid in full;

(b) You will be in default, you will be assessed an administrative fee, and your debt will be immediately forwarded to the United States Treasury in accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-134).

(c) You will be ineligible for Payment Plans for the next 6 years.

§ 171.565 How will I know if BIA plans to adjust my annual operation and maintenance assessment rate?

(a) We provide public notice of our proposed rates annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) You may contact the irrigation facility servicing your farm unit.

§ 171.570 What is the Federal Register and where can I get it?

(a) The FEDERAL REGISTER is the official daily publication for Rules, Proposed Rules, and Notices of official actions by Federal agencies and organizations, as well as Executive Orders and other Presidential Documents, and is produced by the United States Government Printing Office (GPO).

(b) You can get publications of the FEDERAL REGISTER:

(1) By going on the World Wide Web at <http://www.gpo.gov>;

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(2) By writing to the GPO, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15250–7954; or

(3) By calling GPO at (202) 512–1530.

§ 171.575 Can BIA charge me a special assessment?

Yes. We will make every reasonable effort to avoid charging special assessments. However, if we determine that we have a significant uncontrolled cost due to an urgency, we may charge you a special assessment. We will only charge special assessments when there are inadequate project funds available, including any emergency reserve funds held by the project. The special assessment rate will be calculated by dividing the total uncontrolled cost, or some portion of that cost, by the total number of assessable acres. Your individual special assessment will be equal to the special assessment rate multiplied by the number of assessable acres in your farm unit.

Subpart F—Records, Agreements, and Other Matters

§ 171.600 What information is collected and retained on the irrigation service I receive?

We will collect and retain at least the following information as part of our record of the irrigation service we have provided you:

- (a) Your name;
- (b) Delivery point(s) where service was provided;
- (c) Beginning date and time of your irrigation service;
- (d) Ending date and time of your irrigation service; and
- (e) Amount of water we delivered to your farm unit.

§ 171.605 Can I establish a Carriage Agreement with BIA?

(a) We may agree in writing to carry third-party water through our facilities to your lands not served by our facilities if we have determined that our facilities have adequate capacity to do so.

(b) If we determine that carrying water in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section is jeopardizing our ability to provide irrigation service to the

lands we are required to serve, we will terminate the Agreement.

(c) We may enter into an agreement with a third party to provide service through their facilities to your isolated assessable lands.

(d) You must pay us all administrative, operating, maintenance, and rehabilitation costs associated with any agreement established under this section before we will convey water.

(e) We will notify you in writing no less than five days before terminating a Carriage Agreement established under this section.

(f) We may terminate a Carriage Agreement without notice due to an urgency we have identified.

§ 171.610 Can I arrange an Incentive Agreement if I want to farm idle lands?

We may approve an Incentive Agreement if:

(a) You request one in writing at least 90 days prior to the beginning of the irrigation season that includes a detailed plan to improve the idle lands, which contains at least the following:

- (1) A description of specific improvements you will make, such as clearing, leveling, or other activities that will improve idle lands to a condition that supports authorized use of delivered water;
- (2) The estimated cost of the improvements you will make;
- (3) The time schedule for your proposed improvements;
- (4) Your proposed schedule for water delivery, if necessary; and
- (5) Justification for use of irrigation water during the improvement period.

(b) You sign our Incentive Agreement containing terms and conditions we specify.

§ 171.615 Can I request improvements to BIA facilities as part of my Incentive Agreement?

Yes. You may request and we may agree to make improvements as part of your Incentive Agreement that we determine are in the best interest of the irrigation facility servicing your farm unit.