

By Russ Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

Pumping at the Rock Creek augmentation project has reached the capacity of the pipeline with a total of 10 wells operating.

During the Upper Republican Natural Resources District meeting last week, board member received updates on the progress of the project.

With 10 wells operating, the field is producing 12,736 gallons per minute. The pumps are operating at various levels, ranging from a high of 1,465 gpm to 1,108 gpm with pressures running between 50-70 lbs.

At present pumping levels, the amount of water flowing into the Republican River should total 16,000 acre-feet (AF) by the end of the year.

The URNRD gets 69 percent credit towards compact compliance for each acre-foot pumped. At that rate, URNRD will get credit for slightly more than 11,000 AF.

To remain in compliance, the Department of Natural Resources has told the URNRD that it needs to offset 10,680 AF of over-pumping that occurred in 2012.

Should a big rain event occur in the district, pumping from the project could be reduced, according to Assistant Manager Dirk Dinnel.

Stream flow up

Dinnel said historic stream flow in the Republican River at Parks totalled 13-15 cubic feet per second (cfs) prior to irrigation development.

Flows in the river now measure 33 cfs, which is more than double historic levels. When pumping at the project began, stream flow in the Republican stood at 7 cfs.

Dinnel said pumping costs are running from \$55,000 to \$60,000 per month during the non-irrigation rate season. That figure will increase to around \$70,000 per month during the irrigation rate season.