



NEWS RELEASE

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RURAL REAL ESTATE PROJECT ANNOUNCES WATER RESOURCE CONSERVATION MILESTONE

BUFFALO, WY – November 21, 2008 – Sand Creek Ranch, a pioneering conservation real estate project on the east slope of the Bighorns, has announced a significant milestone in water conservation and water resource development for northwestern Johnson County.

The Hopkins Producers Irrigation District (HPID), made up of Sand Creek Ranch and four neighboring landowners, recently awarded a contract for nearly \$750,000 in irrigation water conveyance improvements to Utah-based low bidder Johansen Construction. The project is being funded through a Wyoming Water Development Commission grant to HPID and a federal cost share of \$350,000 to the cooperating producers from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service. “We believe we’re demonstrating a soil and water conservation approach that other Wyoming landowners can consider,” notes John Jenkins, Sand Creek’s President and CEO, and HPID’s Secretary / Treasurer.

The project’s objective is to create a sustainable, efficient, gravity-driven Hopkins Pipeline system out of numerous dirt supply ditches built as far back as 1884. The system will take water originating high up in the Bighorns each year to the ranches below, irrigating over 2,000 acres of hayfields and pastures. Lands of the irrigation district begin about two miles northwest of Buffalo and extend to near the foot of the Bighorn Mountains.

The goal is to increase efficiency in hay production and grazing by eliminating water loss, while also eliminating destructive soil erosion on ranch meadows and hillsides and reducing sedimentation flows into the greater Clear Creek watershed. “The NRCS and WWDC have provided invaluable support, engineering and administrative contributions in making this project a reality,” added Jenkins.

Construction is expected to be complete by Spring 2009. The project will include over 20,000 linear feet of buried pipeline serving the five ranches, with 30” diameter pipe beginning at the top of the reach. This will enable producers to convert to center pivot and other more efficient sprinkler irrigation, but with unusually high energy efficiency. HPID members estimate hay production may increase by up to five times historical averages, creating more production forage while improving overall wildlife habitat.

The Hopkins Pipeline project is also instrumental in enabling a broad set of on-farm irrigation improvements for the Sand Creek Ranch Conservation Community. The community’s design integrates protected open space, ongoing ranch and farm production, recreation and secluded ranch neighborhoods, providing a genuine alternative to conventional rural subdivision ranchettes.

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