

## Help is available

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) offers a dispute resolution program for farmers and rural landowners.

Disputes often arise in rural Oregon over property boundaries, water distribution and maintenance responsibilities, weeds, or right of way issues.

ODA can help bring together property owners who share private irrigation ditches. Meeting together may help to resolve disagreements, manage water rotation schedules, facilitate coordination with irrigation districts, and address weed problems and property access issues. Additionally, mediators can help foster other beneficial arrangements mutually developed by irrigators.

## Working together can lead to great things

- reduced tension among neighbors
- shared understanding of rules and water distribution agreements
- more certainty of water delivery
- efficient use of irrigation water that can improve crop and forage yields
- possible access to additional technical and financial resources from state or federal programs to improve water delivery efficiencies.

Resolving water disputes is a better way to **GET YOUR WATER.**

Working together, you and your neighbor may also benefit from potential technical and financial **RESOURCES** to help improve irrigation efficiency and water quality.

## Help is affordable

In most cases, the cost to each party is \$35 per hour for time spent with the professional mediator. That's not much for peace of mind and an agreement with your neighbors about fair sharing of water!

Most meetings of this type last two to four hours depending on the number of parties and complexities of issues; some last longer, some shorter.

## Supporting organizations

- Arnold Irrigation District
- Central Oregon Irrigation District
- Ochoco Irrigation District
- North Unit Irrigation District
- Swalley Irrigation District
- Three Sisters Irrigation District
- Tumalo Irrigation District
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon Department of Water Resources
- Oregon Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- Middle Deschutes Watershed Councils
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Oregon State University Extension Service
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Wy'East Resource and Conservation Development District
- Deschutes River Conservancy

Oregon Department of Agriculture  
Farm Mediation Program  
1-800-347-7028  
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**Oregon**  
Department  
of Agriculture

*The Oregon Department of Agriculture cooperates with irrigation districts and other organizations to help resolve disputes over shared private irrigation ditches.*

# If you have a water issue...



*Irrigation districts in Central Oregon historically delivered water to farmers who irrigated large acreages. Today, many of those farmlands are now divided into smaller acreages where irrigation districts deliver to a single head gate. Multiple water users, now on the same ditch, can find working together to be complicated.*

## **Do you need help working with your neighbors on a shared irrigation ditch?**

*The ODA Central Oregon Water Dispute Program can help.*



**There is help to find  
common ground.**

**1** When you need help dealing with challenging neighbors over water related issues, consider contacting ODA's mediation service to set up a meeting with the neighbors.



**2** Call: 1-800-347-7028, or  
email: [bsearle@oda.state.or.us](mailto:bsearle@oda.state.or.us)



**3** ODA will consult with you, notify the other parties, and invite them to meet with a professional facilitator for assistance.

**Resolved disputes may result in a more equitable sharing of irrigation water and other beneficial outcomes. Give it a try!**

Neither ODA, nor the mediator, will solve your problems for you. But, we can help open communication, manage the emotional setting, help parties evaluate the issues, find mutual interests, generate options that benefit all parties, discuss whether monitoring or checking-in at certain intervals would be helpful, and suggest other strategies to help reach a beneficial outcome.