

**SQUAW CREEK DITCH COMPANY**  
**APPLICATION FOR IWRB Aging Infrastructure Grant**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL**

**ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANT CONSIDERATION:**

The Squaw Creek Ditch Company is a non-for-profit corporation formed in 1896 for the purpose of providing irrigation water delivery to 1,327 acres in the Squaw Creek Valley. The Company is part of Water District Number 2 in Gem County. As a result of the Company's age, its canal has a significant need for financial support moving forward with the modernization of its infrastructure.

**PROJECT DETAILS:**

• **Applicant Information:**

- The applicant (Squaw Creek Ditch Company) is a not-for-profit company organized in 1896 to provide irrigation water to 1,327 acres in the Squaw Creek Valley. The Company owns Water Right Nos. 65-2379, 65-3043, and 65-3044.
- The Company currently has one hundred shareholders who are assessed fees on an annual basis - annual revenue generated from assessments is approximately \$56,000.00.
- The Company currently operates under Bylaws adopted as amended on March 9, 2020. Company management includes a three-member Board of Directors which includes a President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer. The Company hires a ditch rider whose responsibility is primarily the canal's waterflow and annual maintenance in conjunction with the Board. This includes canal cleaning, bank repair, flume maintenance, moss radication, maintaining adequate water flow and troubleshooting shareholder needs and emergency issues, and overseeing special projects the ditch requires.

The Company meets with shareholders on an annual basis on the first Monday in February and whenever necessary beyond this date to deal with special issues.

- Annual irrigation water services commence on April 15<sup>th</sup> and end on October 15th
- Our ditch is unique in that it flows through various topography that includes a rock walled canyon, extremely rugged terrain, and flat land all of which require different considerations when dealing with maintenance and ongoing modernization projects.

- **Project Proposal:**

The Sweet Valley continues to grow in population and the need for water on an individual shareholder basis is also increasing. The ability of our Company to support the growth and increased demand for irrigation services requires an efficient, effective delivery system. Our Grant request focuses on the costs associated with the modernization of a section of the Company's canal that requires better waterflow, maintenance access and safety.

**Description of Project:** The Company is requesting financial support to:

- Straighten and widen approximately 1,950 feet of the existing canal (Gem County Latitude 44.000658/Longitude -116.32201 to Gem County Latitude 44.00229/Longitude -116.32661) to support full water flow for delivery of irrigation water to one-hundred shareholders with 1,327 acres. The current width of the canal in this section varies from 3 to 6 feet. There is only a bank on one side of the canal in the area due to a sheer wall of lava rock on the other. Widening and straightening both the canal and bank in this area requires the blasting and removal of the rock wall. *The Project will expand the canal to eight feet in width which will allow for improved water flow and reduce flooding potential.*
- Raise and widen bank of approximately 1,950 feet of existing canal (Gem County Latitude 44.000658/Longitude -116.32201 to Gem County Latitude 44.00229/Longitude -116.32661). The bank in this area does not allow for safe maintenance access and the canal provides limited water flow. In this section of the canal, it is difficult and unsafe to maintain due to the narrow width of the canal and little or no bank on either side. In this section, the west bank is 2 to 4 feet wide and there is no bank on the east side of the canal. On the east side of the canal is a sheer rock wall. Maintenance in this area is extremely unsafe as is access to the canal.

It is important to note that our canal in this section runs parallel (but at a height of sixty feet above) a neighboring irrigation ditch (the Squaw Creek Irrigation District ditch). With the current bank being so narrow, we are in extreme jeopardy of a rockslide/erosion impacting the water flow of our neighbor's ditch and the Squaw Creek River. *The Project will allow us to gain at a minimum of 10-12 feet of bank width and raise the bank by a minimum of three feet. This will enable the Company to sustain water flow stability, manage potential flooding with better access to the canal and significantly reduce the potential for canal failure.*

**Where will the Project occur:** The Project will occur in Gem County Latitude 44.02405/Longitude -116.32485 Longitude TO Gem County Latitude 44.00229/Longitude -116.32485.

Photos of project area see Attachment C

**Benefits of Project:** This project will provide the following benefits to the Company's shareholders, Gem County, and the state of Idaho.

- Improve canal's bank reliability by eliminating high probability of flooding and erosion in targeted area
- Eliminate safety risk of bank failure and flooding
- Reduce the chance of not being able to supply water to all shareholders
- Creates water supply stability and sustainability for 100 percent shareholder's property
- Eliminates the potential of impeding the waterflow of neighboring irrigation ditch (Squaw Creek Irrigation District) and the Squaw Creek River
- Widening and straightening of canal and raising its bank allows full flow of water to shareholders
- Widening and straightening of canal and raising and expanding the bank allows for better conservation of water

**Project Schedule:**

1. Prepare and submit request for IWRB Aging Infrastructure Grant – due August 1, 2025
2. Research and submit proposals for additional funding opportunities (including bank loans) to meet the Company's 50% obligation during the period August 1, 2025, through June 2026
3. IWRB Grant approval target date November 2025
4. If Grant approved, submit to shareholders for approval to move forward in December 2025
5. Sign Grant Contract targeted for January 2026
6. Temporary easement agreement creation and approvals from four impacted property owners January 1 to June 30, 2026
7. Construction to begin mid-October 2026 to include:
  - a. Drilling and blasting
  - b. Removal of shot rock and hauling to approved local properties
  - c. Digging and relocation of canal (including raising of the bank's level)
  - d. Clean up including leveling, grading and reclamation of bank and canal
8. No permitting necessary – due to it being an existing ditch
9. Construction completion estimated mid-February 2027
10. New land surveys as required for four impacted property owners upon completion of Project March to June 2027

**Project Plans and Specifications:**

- Superior Blasting - Drilling/Blasting Contractor and Precision Control Specialists – Preliminary design for completion of Project see attachment A - \$402,088.00 (billed through Church Enterprises Estimate)
- Church Enterprises - removal of shot rock and stockpiling of rock elsewhere, digging and relocation of canal, cleaning, and reclamation of Project area – for Project estimate see attachment B – Estimate includes Superior Blasting preliminary design costs – total outside contractors' estimate is \$1,045,800.00

**Project Team:**

Outside Contractor: Church Enterprises

- The company is a local sole-proprietor organization owned by Harvey A. Church
- Time commitment for the Project is 6 to 7 weeks
- Harvey graduated from Emmett High School in 1967 and worked in the logging industry for 30 years as he built his excavation business on the side
- Harvey served in the Army in the Southeast Asia conflict of Vietnam
- In 2005, Harvey left logging to concentrate on building his excavation business purchasing additional equipment including a rock crusher and dump trucks
- Harvey's experience in excavation services has given him expertise in road construction and working with a similar rock to that which the irrigation company is dealing with in the widening and straightening of their canal
- Harvey's company has worked on numerous ditch projects including previous canal failures and the prior IWRB Grant Project which was completed under budget. Harvey is familiar with the modernization needs of the ditch including the Project on which we are proposing.
- Harvey's business location (the Sweet Valley) reduces the Project costs in drive time and labor.
- Harvey has the only access by land to bring in the heavy equipment that is required for the Project.
- Harvey is a Sweet Valley landowner who fully understands the benefits the Squaw Creek Ditch Company and its irrigation services bring to the valley's landowners

Outside Contractor: Superior Blasting located in Boise, Idaho

- The company will perform the tasks of blasting and drilling of canal's sheer rock wall
- 5 to 6 weeks' time commitment
- The Company, founded in the early 1980s, provides over 40 years of experience. It is a precision drilling and blasting organization specializing in the application of high explosives

for controlled blasting. Their expertise extends to construction, utility, pipeline, mining, and aggregate industries.

- Their clients include quarries, private contractors, and public construction companies throughout eight western states. The Company's qualified and licensed personnel take pride in providing safe, dependable, cost efficient and professional services.
- Their employees go through extensive education and training in the specialized fields of rock drilling, controlled blasting techniques, vibration monitoring, explosive material applications and quarry development.
- The company operates in Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Company Ditch Rider – Project Manager Lead: Bobby Porter

- Company ditch rider for 2 years
- 25 years working in construction managing earth moving projects including reclamation work, mass grading, roadway work, canal, dam and waterflow work
- Carries a federal blasting license
- Project manager for the last IWRB Grant project
- Time commitment as required August 2025 through project completion

Company President – Project Supervision and planning: John Avila

- Retired resident of Squaw Valley with management experience
- Resident of Squaw Valley and Company shareholder
- Time commitment as required August 2025 through project completion

Company Secretary/Treasurer – Project Supervision and finances: Tracy Monticelli

- Retired Director of Finance at Foster Poultry Farms, a 2.5 billion company
- Resident of Squaw Valley and Company shareholder
- Time commitment as required August 2025 through project completion

Company Shareholder – Grant coordinator and administration: Melanie Condon

- Retired Vice President of Participant Communications – John Hancock Retirement Plan Services
- Resident of Squaw Valley and Company shareholder
- Time commitment as required August 2025 through project completion

**Urgency of Project:** The Squaw Creek Ditch Company was established in 1896. Since its inception there has been substantial growth in shareholders that put stress on the Company with multiple laterals needed to support all shareholders' water delivery. Over the years significant bank erosion has occurred resulting in safety and water supply issues increasing dramatically. This Project will help to significantly resolve areas of the canal most impacted and areas that have the most potential to fail in the coming years.

**Public Interest of Project:**

- Efficient delivery of irrigation water to shareholder properties in the valley is essential to the growth and future of the Squaw Valley.
- The Company is the primary source of water for both livestock and farming operations throughout the Valley. It would be unfeasible economically for shareholders to source their irrigation needs from private wells.
- Without the Company's efficient water source for irrigation – the valley would not be able to sustain farming and livestock operations. Nor would the Valley be able to support continued growth.
- Waterflow from the Company's canal is an essential source of water for the local Fire Department. The Department uses canal water for both residential and wild fires. The Department has direct access to water from the canal at their firehouse. Canal failure would eliminate this water resource for the Department.
- Without the ability to make continued improvements to the Company's infrastructure there will be little opportunity for the Valley's future growth.
- The Company's canal provides both stability of the irrigation water supply and its sustainability.
- As time passes and the Valley continues to grow – we will need to address the water needs of property owners who currently are not within the Bylaws definition of a shareholder (i.e., land west of canal). Without a properly maintained canal we will be unable to be a source of water for their potential irrigation water needs.

**Budget Planning and Cost-Effectiveness:**

- Candidly, the first option is to do nothing and wait for potential canal and bank failure through mud and/or rockslides or to merely band-aid our canal access issues – this option provides no benefit long-term for both Valley residents and Company shareholders. In our estimation this is not an option.
- A second option would be to dig a deeper canal to increase waterflow – but this option does not address the bank and maintenance and safety issues or the maximization of water flow.
- As a result, we choose to take the more aggressive option of blasting and removing rock that currently restricts our ability to widen and straightening both our canal and its bank. We believe that this is the best option for addressing current and future stability and sustainability of irrigation water flow and the most cost-effective option in the long term.
- Cost estimates of foreseen costs of materials and labor are outlined in the Project Plan and Specifications Section of this request.

Outside contractor estimates:	\$ 1,045,800.00
Legal and property surveys:	15,000.00
Administration, planning and supervision:	<u>10,000.00</u>
 Total foreseen costs:	 <u>\$ 1,070,800.00</u>

The justification for the outside contractor costs outlined in their individual estimates found in Attachments A and B.

**Sources of funding for Project:**

Company Annual Assessments:	\$ 56,000.00
Company Loan TBD:	150,000.00
Other Company Grant Opportunities TBD:	<u>329,400.00</u>
Subtotal:	<u>535,400.00</u>
IWRB Aging Infrastructure Grant:	<u>535,400.00</u>
 Total funding:	 <u>\$1,070,800.00</u>