

Ditch Doings May 2020

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*...time to change my shoes.....*



*...finishing up our project at the Main Headgate...*



*...final steps...planting the last willows. For most of them, we were able to get them clear down into the water table. They are responding...buds are swelling.*



...*minute details*... Keith had very carefully anchored these little rocks into a very stable configuration: great for protecting and maintaining the slope but with a somewhat contrived look.



...*nice finishing touch*... he then took the last two loader-bucket loads of remaining rocks, sand, and gravel, and casually sprinkled it, haphazardly, over the bank, filling all the little gaps and cracks and giving the whole thing a slightly less manicured look while anchoring it all in place. I like it! Now all we need is a little high water to test it out. Not too likely, this year, I'm afraid..

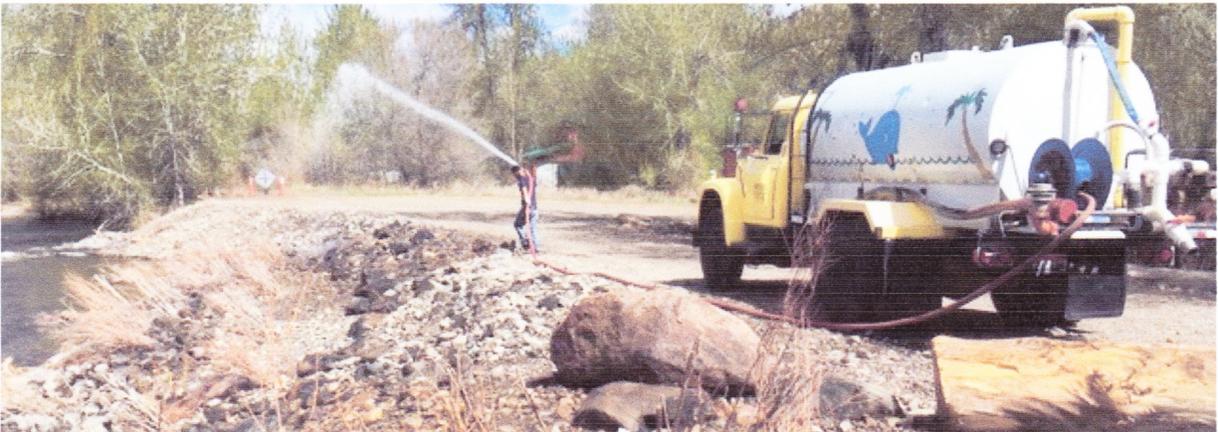


...*"Alex" boulders*... for marking and protecting the end of the concrete wall.



...*Impenetrable barriers...*to keep the delinquents from getting too close to Main Headgate...

And its all done!! All the signs and gates are back in place. It looks good! Check it out!



...*a little water for the the willows....* Ideally, the lower end of the willow cuttings would reach into the water. If we don't have a normal Spring high water we might loose some. For this reason we've arranged to water them once a week for a couple of months hoping they'll get established.



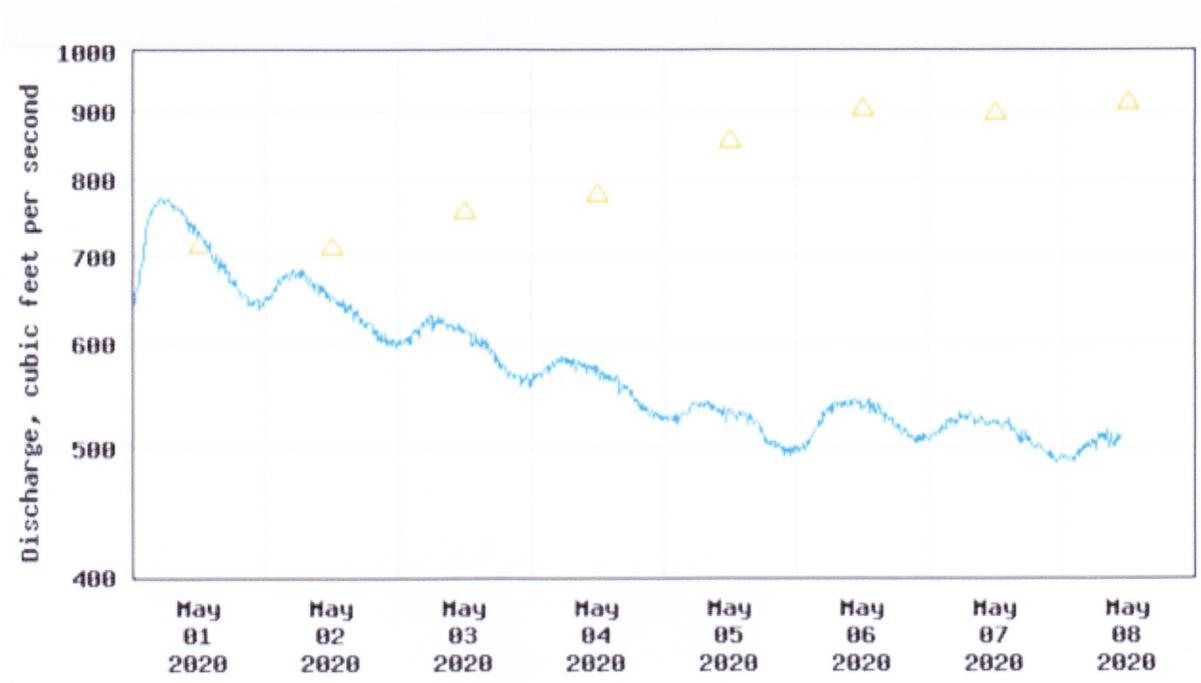
*...sprinkle a little gold for good measure...*

The end result is that the old delapidated vertical wall is gone completely and in its place is a thoroughly fortified bank. It is higher, safer, and will last indefinitely, providing protection to the top of the canal. The rough construction serves to slow the high water down to help reduce erosion thereby reducing the amount of debris being transported into the canal.

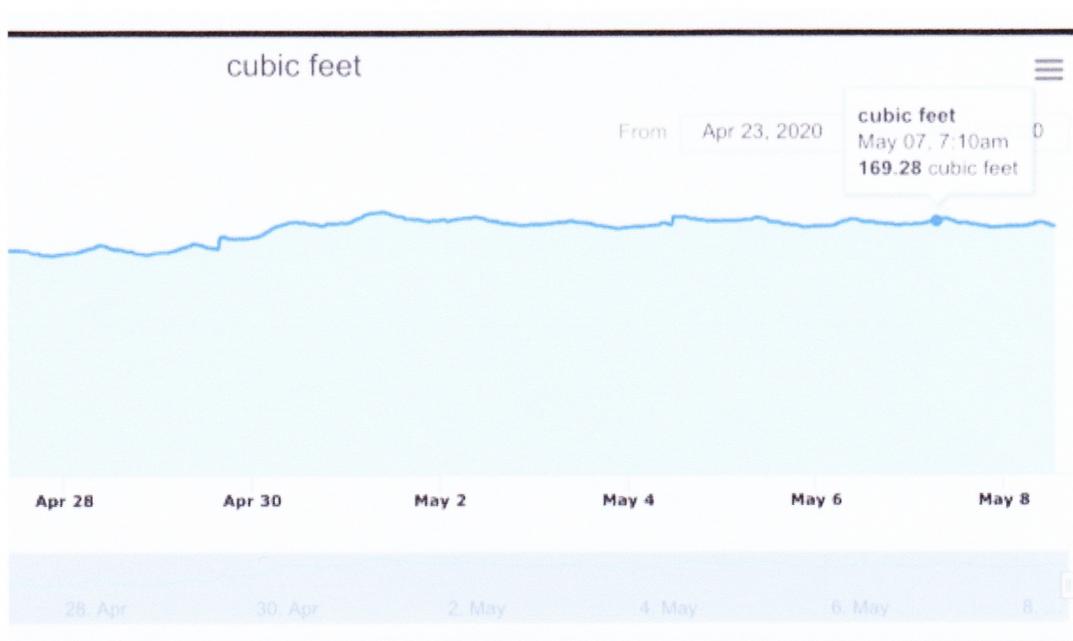
The gentle slope also slows the water down and provides a tad of space for high water to spread out into. The old practice of armoring our river banks with high steep stacks of large boulders, which don't remain in place for long, has the opposite effect: it contains the high water into narrow confined spaces and speeds it up increasing the rate of erosion throughout the length of the valley. A river, by its nature, needs space to spread out into it or it will periodically, relentlessly, thrash its neighbors.



*...and we are back to work!*



...but the river isn't cooperating...(..the yellow shows the average flow for this time of year...)



...our access to water is very good...very steady, in spite of the river. We have what we need, at the moment. But it's still early. I would expect the river to come up for the next 2-3 weeks. Typically, it peaks in late May or early June. It just won't last too long, this year.



...3 new measuring devices.... very helpful for measuring, managing, and recording flows.

These instruments, which give us real-time flow, came from a cost-share arrangement with State District 37 and the local ground water districts. I feel like I'm the one who benefits the most. With the help of my phone, I can see almost immediately what adjustments, where, need to be carried out. In addition, all the records are permanent.

site	status	level	CF/S	AF Total Yesterday	Avg CF/ Yesterd.
Div.45	normal	3.09 ft	165.8	331.84	168.0
Lower75	normal	0.60 ft	10.6	21.92	11.1
Walker	normal	0.73 ft	6.1	12.98	6.6
Browning	normal	0.97 ft	12.1	21.41	10.8
Cove Upper	normal	1.01 ft	20.3	36.80	18.7
Cove Lower	high	1.26 ft	12.9	24.21	12.1
Black61	high	1.96 ft	46.3	87.94	44.8
Baseline H.E.	normal	0.39 ft	2.3	1.12	0.6



*...looking north on the newly cleaned section of the Walker Lateral..*



*...looking south along lower section of the 75 Lateral. Both photos show my practice of allowing the west banks to remain rough and unmanicured. Most of our wind, and therefore our weeds and trash, comes from the west. These low "barriers" serve to catch much of that blowing debris and save us from having to retrieve it continually.*

It works well!

Call me, or text, anytime, if you're turning your water off or on. Thanks.

John Wright  
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