

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

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Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes today announced approval of a recommendation by the Bureau of Reclamation that the payment of \$40,247.77 of the \$55,000 due this year from the Belle Fourche Irrigation District be postponed.

The district, which represents the lands of the Belle Fourche Reclamation project in South Dakota, has a contract calling for repayment of the construction costs of the project. The extension of time on part of its present installment is given under the provisions of reclamation projects relief Act of May 31, 1939.

George O. Sanford, General Supervisor of Operation and Maintenance, who made the investigation required under the Act, said that the project, which is in the heart of the Great Plains drought area, had experienced repeated water shortages since 1933 due to subnormal rainfall, and that the prospects for 1939 were unfavorable. The area which could be irrigated and cropped was greatly reduced because of lack of water, while in prior years summer rains had made it possible to obtain a much greater total production.

By special action, the district, at its request, was authorized to deliver water to those with delinquencies for the years 1929, 1935 and 1936.

The part of the annual payment which was extended will become due and payable in the sixth year after the final payment originally scheduled in the contract of the district.

The action taken today in connection with the request for relief made by
the Belle Fourche Irrigation District was the first to be taken under the Act.