

The construction of these projects has extended the benefits of water to all parts of the dry area: as a result, a much larger number of farmers have been rehabilitated than would have been possible through the construction of large schemes on well-defined watersheds and without the movement of settlers from their present holdings. The maintenance of valuable live-stock herds has been secured by assuring dependable water supplies on farm stock-watering projects and through the development of 90,000 acres of irrigated land on small irrigation schemes.

*Community Projects.*—The development of community projects is necessarily confined within the narrow reaches of well-defined watersheds where sufficient water resources are available. Where a group of farmers organizes a water-users' association or a rural municipality provides leadership in an irrigation or water-storage project, PFRA co-operates with the local body. The usual procedure is for the Government of Canada to assume the capital cost of storage and connecting works and the provincial body to assume the responsibility for the distribution of water to the land or along the watershed. The local body also undertakes maintenance and operation.

To Mar. 31, 1954, PFRA provided the necessary assistance to construct 292 community projects, the majority of which are located on six watersheds originating in the three Prairie Provinces. The purpose of these projects is to conserve the surplus spring runoff water to supplement short supply later in the year. By maintaining stream flows, farmers are assured of dependable water supplies for live stock and for irrigation use. In addition, community projects provide homes for farmers moved from submarginal areas to where they can be assured a livelihood.

PFRA's responsibility for the development of large community irrigation schemes terminates with the construction of primary reservoirs and connecting canals. In special cases where the need for early returns to farmers proved imminent, PFRA has assisted further in the development of the irrigable land and has maintained a constant surveillance of the project's operations and progress. At times, agreement has been reached between PFRA and the provincial government concerned whereby PFRA provides engineering and financial assistance to construct primary works and the province agrees to assist with the development of the irrigable area. Such an agreement is in effect in connection with sections of the Swift Current Irrigation project being developed in Saskatchewan.

*Major Irrigation Projects.*—During recent years PFRA has administered special votes by Parliament for the construction of water conservation and development projects that involve large expenditures of money. These undertakings have extended PFRA administration beyond the boundaries of the PFRA area in the three Prairie Provinces into British Columbia.

*St. Mary Irrigation Project.*—The St. Mary Irrigation project has been undertaken by agreement between the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta. The Government of Canada has agreed to construct the main supply reservoirs and connecting works. The Province of Alberta has undertaken the responsibility for construction of the auxiliary reservoirs and distribution system from the main works to the land (*see also* p. 398).