



TID TIDINGS

Newsletter of the Tulare Irrigation District

Board of Directors

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The Board of Directors holds regular public meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 9:00 am at the District office in Tulare.

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RELOCATION PLANS

After 57 years at the corner of San Joaquin Ave. and West St. in Tulare, TID is now taking steps to move its O&M and administrative facilities to a location outside of town. For nearly three years the Board of Directors, and its appointed Building Committee, have been evaluating needed updates to its current site and space requirements for the administrative functions. Also, the Board has been mindful of the rapid pace of residential development westerly of our current location, for many years thought to be essentially the edge of town. Moving heavy equipment in and out of the TID yard is becoming increasingly difficult as the level of traffic has been mounting in this area.

West San Joaquin Ave - How We Got Here and Why We Are Leaving

Following its formation in 1889, TID remained for many years a tenant at various sites in and outside of town. We purportedly got booted out of one location due to not paying the rent! Having no permanent work crew in those early years, TID did not maintain a maintenance yard. From about the 1920's, what little equipment we possessed was stored in a barn just north of town at the corner of West St and Cartmill Ave. Farmer bills were paid and financial books were kept at office space leased from G. Moran at the Bebee building downtown.

Then, during the 1940's, TID was growing and taking steps to acquire more water and expand its service territory. That it was going to need a headquarters of its own from which to conduct business was becoming evident. Around this time a landmark agreement between TID and the City of Tulare was struck to put to bed several issues involving City growth and TID land taxes. In that agreement, the City deeded the four acres along West St. to TID for its new home. At some point that property fell into the lap of the City due to the owner's back taxes and associated estate complications. Interestingly, a descendent of that family - Freeman Allen and Ida Thomas - is none other than Michael Thomas, current TID Board member. Dave Zack, TID's secretary/manager at the time, designed the cinder block administrative building we now reside in. TID's buildings and yard site have been modified and expanded somewhat over the years but, in the end, the time came to consider relocating.

Staff estimates of upgrading our current site proved too high to justify delaying what was considered to be an ultimate move out of town someday in the future. Also motivating the Board towards moving was the Tulare Redevelopment Agency's interest in the current site for residential dwellings. An attractive price was offered that would allow use of the sale proceeds towards buying new land and constructing new facilities. Despite the substantial cost to move and start anew, the TID Board felt that the decision would better accommodate the City's zoning and development plans for the west side and get our equipment storage and repair operations out of the way of such City vision for the future.



Current Office Circa 1953 - Looking North from San Joaquin Ave.

Construction costs for new O&M and administrative facilities are estimated to be around \$2.5 million. TID has built up sufficient reserves over the last several years such that this cost can be absorbed without the need to raise either TID assessments or water sale rates to growers. Fortunately, the City is very accommodating in allowing TID to remain at its current site rent-free for adequate time to design and build at its new location. Like it did over 55 years ago, the City is again assisting in TID's relocation, this time with help in moving away from the site once provided to us many years ago.

Where We Are Going

TID is currently looking at suitable properties on the outskirts of the City in areas that are not expected to urbanize any time soon and also provide efficient access to all of TID's water facilities. The area just northwest of town, being roughly in the geographical center of the District, holds promise for a new landing site. We expect to be very busy over the next several months in evaluating property alternatives along with zoning and other permitting restrictions with the goal of pinpointing a site for TID's future by early next year.

CALIFORNIA'S WATER— TV SERIES ON PBS

A new PBS television series is up and running that serves to educate the general public about California's most precious natural resource. "California's Water" is a multi-part series produced by Huell Howser and underwritten by members of the Association of California Water Agencies.

The series explores California's water resources and the complex system of natural and man-made features that has allowed growing cities, productive farms and ecosystems to co-exist in a state that receives little or no rain for months at a time.

Segments have begun to air and will continue to roll out over the next several months on all 13 PBS stations. Topics covered in the series include an overview of the state's water system, the Delta, water recycling, watershed, the Colorado River and much more. An updated schedule of airdates for these and other segments can be found at www.acwa.com.

The "California's Water" series is bringing the key messages of ACWA's policy document, *No Time to Waste: A Blueprint for California Water*, to the public in a user-friendly manner.

Segment titles include:

- Climate Change
- The Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta
- Flood Fight of 2006
- What's New on the Colorado River
- California's Water System
- Sacramento Valley: Working Together Pays Off
- Storing Water
- Water Recycling Imitates Nature
- We All Live in a Watershed
- Desalting Ocean Water
- Living with Nature (Endangered Species)
- Moving Water and Meeting Needs (Water Transfers)
- Protecting Against Floods
- Regional Solutions for Local Needs

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER SETTLEMENT - EFFORT STALLS IN D.C.

Agreed to by Friant and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in September of 2006, the Settlement Agreement for the San Joaquin River has been moving towards actual implementation at a snail's pace this year. After its execution, things happened in rapid succession, with initial funding from the state secured via the passage of Prop. 84 and execution of contract amendments by Friant districts to comport with Settlement flow commitments. With like speed, Senator Feinstein and Congressman Radanovich moved with tandem legislation to authorize USBR's participation in the Settlement fish restoration and water projects and to also commit the federal dollars towards the program. This is where things stalled as it became apparent that Congress' rather complicated rules on budget spending were making it very difficult to identify the sources from which would come the money to be earmarked for the Settlement program. This hiatus is exactly where we stand today, with the legislative session winding down and solutions to find the federal dollars narrowing to just a very few. Much would be at stake and considerable uncertainty would exist should this legislation not pass by early 2008 so all involved parties to this effort are very focused on bringing the federal legislation to the finish line.

Meanwhile, the suspected impacts of the Settlement have not gone unnoticed here in the southern San Joaquin Valley. With the estimated loss of 150,000 to 200,000 AF annually on the average to the Friant ser-

vice area, many fear the worst in terms of ag land impacts and economic losses. The Settlement has received mixed views, and opinions up or down turn largely on one's comfort level with the only alternative to this plan, that being back in front of the judge. Also, many are anxious to define as soon as possible the projects to offset the water losses, the conceptual plan for which is spelled out within the Water Management Goal provisions of the Settlement document itself. These projects and their funding, like all else related to Settlement implementation, are taking shape slowly and cannot be put in place overnight. Aiding in local frustration over the Settlement intentions is this year's near drought conditions, bringing home how quickly we are at significant odds with the environmental community over water allocations. Our Settlement partner NRDC has, on another water-war front, been successful in curbing the operation of the state and federal export pumps in the Delta, raising concerns over the ability to recirculate San Joaquin River fishery flows by exchange back to Friant, one of the key programs referenced and envisioned in the Water Management Goal of the Settlement. TID remains committed to seeing the Settlement effort through and supports the passage of legislation which provides funds for both the Restoration and Water Management Goals. Should this fail, and we expect to know more about this fairly soon, we may all be back to the drawing boards.

The Settlement, driven by an NRDC lawsuit to force water down the lower San Joaquin River for fishery purposes, contains two goals: One – the Restoration Goal - is to restore fish populations in the River below Friant Dam, which will entail extensive channel improvements, fish screening and increased River flows. The other – the Water Management Goal - is to implement projects to avoid or mitigate for Friant water supply losses due to the increased River flows which would otherwise be delivered to Friant districts.

DELTA WATER SUPPLY - MAJOR CUTBACK BY JUDGE RULING

On August 31st, U.S. District Court Judge Wanger in Fresno issued an order severely limiting water exports from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The order was his decision in a lawsuit filed by NRDC challenging Delta pumping operations due to depleted populations of the Delta Smelt, a two to three-inch fish that resides year-round in the Delta. The Delta serves as the state's key water hub, in that supplies – about 6 to 8 million acre-feet per year – are moved from the water-rich north across the Delta and drawn into the export pumps and canals operated by the federal and state water projects. The water is destined for delivery to the Southern San Joaquin Valley's west side and to Southern California as far south as San Diego County.



Delta Smelt - Actual Size About 3 in.

The supply cut is estimated to be in the 30% range, and which water users will absorb the cuts is just beginning to be sorted out. While it is generally agreed that the Delta Smelt struggles are due to a number of possible factors, the export pump curtailments are the only readily available means of effecting their population levels. Smelt are drawn into

the pumps and killed during export operations. The judge's decision stands for 1 ½ years, during which time the water project operator must come up with plans to avoid the impacts at the pumps. No one is holding out hope for a quick solution, so Delta exporters plan to have to live with this unprecedented cutback for some time.

This new Delta restriction is also resonating here within the Friant community on the east side. We have hopeful intentions of pursuing a recirculation plan – spelled out in the Settlement's Water Management Goal (see article "San Joaquin River Settlement – Effort Stalls in D.C." on p. 2) which could potentially return to us some of the water devoted to the fishery program in the lower San Joaquin River. This could be done by pumping it from the Delta into the export system and from there to Kern County and across eastward to the tail end of Friant's canal system. With Judge Wanger's decision, the existing bottle neck in the Delta is further reinforced and some are worried that one of the key features of the Water Management Goal has been derailed in the process. What could make matters worse is that in October that same judge is scheduled to determine if additional modifications in Delta water system operation are warranted to protect salmon and that species dependence of the river systems feeding into the Delta.

STATEWIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Water managers and environmental experts recognize that California's statewide water system is in crisis. But despite intense media coverage and focus by the governor and legislators, the public remains unaware of the state's water problems. That's why the Association of California Water Agencies, a coalition of 450 public water agencies, has launched a statewide public education program, "California's Water: A Crisis We Can't Ignore." This multi-faceted program will inform Californians about critical challenges now confronting the state's water supply and delivery system.

As long as water flows when the tap is turned on, most people don't think about what it takes to get water to their home—or whether it will always be so readily available. The truth is that California is facing serious problems that could ultimately lead to water rationing and reduced supplies throughout the state. ACWA's public education program will educate people about these mounting problems, such as aging infrastructure, environmental concerns, drought, climate change and new pressures associated with California's ever-growing population.

One of the biggest worries is the future of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. The Delta, a key natural estuary and the pathway through which more than 25 million Californians and 2.5 million acres of productive farmland receive their water, is in an ecological crisis that threatens both our water supply and the environment.

Experts warn that a strong earthquake or other natural disaster could damage the deteriorating levees and cripple water deliveries for up to two years.

Our state's many blessings – a strong economy, temperate climate and diverse culture – continue to draw people here. Yet despite continuing population growth, we have not made any significant improvements in the statewide water storage and delivery system in 30 years.

Today, the need to balance human and environmental needs is more important than ever. But it is not always easy. A case in point is a recent ruling in federal court that will cut deliveries by the state's two largest water systems by up to one-third next year to protect an endangered fish—potentially the largest court-ordered water supply reduction in California history.

And although state and local water agencies have done much to promote water conservation and efficiencies, these programs alone will not solve our problems. The collective impacts of drought, climate change, supply reductions and potential natural disasters have created a crisis that we cannot solve simply through conservation. But we cannot afford to ignore these problems—California's economy, environment and quality of life are dependent on the availability of water.

As the local face of water in their community, local water agencies have a responsibility to help educate the public about the challenge California is facing with its water supply and delivery system. ACWA's new public education program is designed to educate the public about the state's growing water crisis through television, radio and print advertising, as well as through the Internet and community outreach. The program kicked off this month and will continue through the remainder of 2007. For more information, visit www.calwatercrisis.org.

EMPLOYEE NEWS

We extend a warm welcome to Mike Cathey, our newest Ditch Maintenance and Ditch Tender employee. Mike hails from Tulare, and joins us with previous ditch maintenance experience from Waste Water Management of Visalia.



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Visit Us At... www.tulareid.org



Founded in 1889, Tulare ID was one of the first irrigation districts in California. Its purpose is to serve the water supply needs of the greater Tulare area, a rich and agriculturally diverse region within the Southern San Joaquin Valley. The water provided comes locally from the Kaweah River and is also imported from the Federal Central Valley Project.

Important Dates to Remember

October

November

1st—2007-2008 Tax Assessments Mailed

December

20th—First Installment Tax Assessments Due