

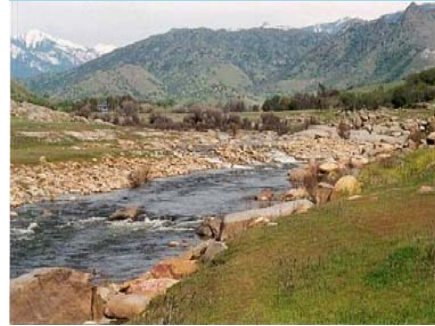
Tulare Irrigation District
 1350 W. San Joaquin Ave.
 Tulare, California 93274

LOOK INSIDE...

City of Tulare Water Partnership
 Water Quality Coalition Deadline
 Groundwater Report
 Employee News
 DVD Available
 New District Reserve Policy

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

December	20th — First Installment Tax Assessments Due
January	
February	

The TID Tidings is published quarterly by the Tulare Irrigation District. Questions about the articles or items appearing in the TID Tidings can be answered by reaching the Tulare ID office at (559) 686-3425



Board of Directors

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



McKay's Point Water Control Facility

DISCOVERING MC KAY'S POINT

McKay's Point, the site where the Kaweah River forks into the St. Johns and Lower Kaweah rivers, is owned by a consortium of three water-related entities, those being the Tulare Irrigation District, Consolidated Peoples Ditch Company, and the Visalia & Kaweah Water Company. It is here where the flow released from Terminus Dam at Lake Kaweah is shepherded down each channel through massive control gates to meet the needs of the various Kaweah water users downstream, some as far away as Lakeside Irrigation District in Kings County. It is a picturesque site, one where nature's beauty and irrigation and flood control activities to serve the region's water needs come together.

history of McKay's Point was written by Sharon Doughty in the December 2004 issue of "Los Tulares," a publication of the Tulare County Historical Society. It is being reprinted with permission here as an interesting recollection of the colorful history surrounding this site.

The Kaweah River delta area was known as "Four Creeks" country. Although there were more than four, early settlers referred to the four creeks as St. Johns, Packwood, Outside Creek, and Deep Creek. Along the Kaweah River, major floods occurred in 1862, 1867, and 1893. In the 1900s, heavy flooding took place in 1916, 1917, 1937, 1950, and 1955. A major

The following article about the

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GROUNDWATER REPORT

After two wet years and glowing reports in TID Tidings about groundwater level recovery, we've been bracing ourselves for the news to be reported in this issue. It boils down to this – levels have dropped about 17 feet across the district since the Fall of 2006, effectively neutralizing nearly three-fourths of the gains achieved during the last two years.

Granted, it was a dry year – the driest since 1994 and the 9th driest in the last 100 years or so. It's still alarming to realize that the positive results of the direct recharge of over 300,000 AF in 2005 and 2006 – let alone the in-lieu recharge as a result of extended irrigation runs – could be so quickly erased in just one short year.

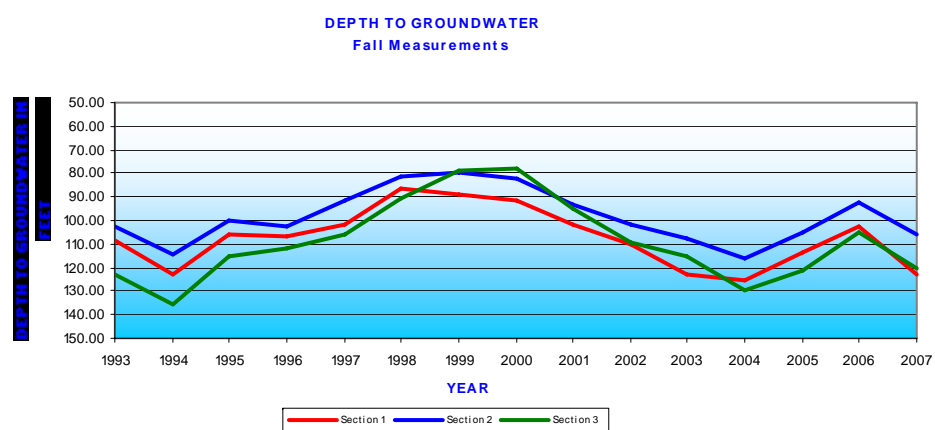
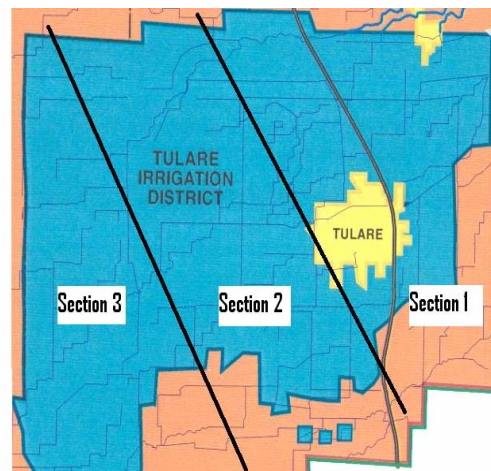
Why is this? The reasons are several and varied:

- First, our recent crop surveys indicate that more water-intensive crops, such as corn and associated double-cropping, are more prominent. With such crops comes a heavier draw on the underground supply.
- Second, the growing cities of Tulare and Visalia are pulling more water from wells year-round, in many cases on once farmland that was able to back off pumping in decent surface-water supply years.
- Third, the hydro-geologic characteristics of the region's aquifers themselves are such that dewatering, i.e., extracting stored water, brings down water levels and head pressures faster than recharge supplies in wetter years from the surface can replenish these aquifers.

Let's hope this downward trend doesn't continue. We all know that the only way for this to happen is with a return to conditions of ample surface water availability from the Kaweah River and imported Friant sources.

TULARE ID

SECTION LOCATIONS



FARMER WORKSHOPS SET TO PLAN FOR DROUGHT

Farmers will gather next month at a series of workshops designed to prepare them for next year's expected drought. The anticipated drought results from water-short weather forecasts and reduced pumping flows from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, as ordered by a federal judge to protect an endangered fish.

The workshops are hosted by the Agricultural Water Management Council, a non-profit organization that assists farm water districts in managing and using water more efficiently.

"Last year was one of the direst in California history during the past 20 years," said Executive Director Mike Wade. "Long-range weather forecasts predict another dry year in southern and central California while a wet season is expected in northern California. But the flow of water from the north to the south must pass through the Delta and court-ordered restrictions will reduce those flows from February through June."

Representatives from local irrigation districts will talk about expected water allocations for the upcoming year during the workshops. UC Cooperative Extension representatives will provide planning tools for farmers to use during critical times of the growing season. The UC representatives will also review irrigation practices geared to improve water quality and stretch limited water supplies.

There is no cost to attend the workshop and a complimentary lunch will follow each workshop.

The workshops will be conducted at the following times and locations:

- **Wednesday, December 5, 2007, 9:30—11:30 a.m.**
Fresno County Farm Bureau Office
1274 W. Hedges Avenue
Fresno, CA 93728
- **Thursday, December 6, 2007, 9:30—11:30 a.m.**
Tulare County Farm Bureau Office
737 North Ben Maddox Way
Visalia, CA 93292

1 hour of DPR continuing education credits will be available. RSVP is requested. If you have questions or to reserve your seat, contact the **Agricultural Water Management Council** at **916-391-5035**.

Modernization Project – New Grant

TID crews have been working full steam to complete a major canal system revitalization and telemetry (SCADA) project, for which we receive a \$300,000 grant from USBR. This project, we consider, to be the first of several phases to enable much of the District's canal system to operate in a more controlled fashion, thereby saving unintentional spills and regulation basin percolation losses. These projects take considerable funds to plan and build, and the grant money is a great catalyst in justifying their pursuit.

TID has recently been awarded another \$50,000 in grant funds from USBR to expand on the first phase. This new grant is for a project to enable the water department to utilize Tagus Basin as a regulating basin, again to minimize canal spills which occur farther downstream. Heretofore, we have only used Tagus for groundwater recharge because of limited flexibility in diverting water to and from the basin. The total project cost, the major part of which will be an automated control gate at the downstream end, is estimated to be around \$120,000. Part of this cost includes TID labor and equipment usage. So, we expect to spend no more than \$40,000 in out-of-pocket costs after inclusion of the grant funds for this worthy project.



RIVER SETTLEMENT — STILL ALIVE IN CONGRESS

In the last issue of "TID Tidings," the status of the Settlement Agreement for the San Joaquin River lawsuit was summarized. Issues such as funding sources, local concerns with respect to adverse impacts, and the potential to get momentum on projects to replace the water lost to the River were discussed. Circumstances have evolved in two key areas, those being a proposed funding mechanism to aid in Congressional approval of the bill (now HR 4074 sponsored by Rep. Jim Costa) and the bill's movement through the House Natural Resources Committee "markup" process.

Regarding the federal funding to initiate the Settlement implementation, a persistent stumbling block has been that Congress' rules essentially require that budget offsets be identified before a new expenditure — such as the Settlement — be approved. Offsets are hard to come by in the competitive realm of Congressional spending, so the Friant Contractors floated a funding idea which has gained considerable attention as of late. The Contractors collectively owe the USBR about \$155 million remaining in construction costs for the Friant Unit facilities, largely Millerton Lake and the Friant-Kern and Madera canals. Of this total, TID's share is about \$12 million. Commensurate with water deliveries each year, this debt is to be fully paid off by the year 2030. Friant's idea is to pay this debt off up-front with cash or, more likely, by borrowing the money in the tax-exempt bond market. In so doing, Congress has funds with which to move forward on Settlement legislation and Friant gains several contractual advantages by converting to a new form of water contract having no capital payment obligations.

Here's the kicker. The money we now owe is interest free, one of the major incentives — often called a subsidy — embodied in the CVP to encourage entities like TID to sign on for water in the late 1940's. Paying off this debt now means taking on a loan and associated interest debt, thus adding to our water costs over time. Well aware of this financial trade off, Friant has offered the deal *only* if the \$7/AF Friant Surcharge (implemented with passage of the CVPIA in 1992) were to largely go away such that there is no net cost to Friant

contractors. This we emphasize, that there's no deal unless the up-front money for the Settlement can be put on the table with no increase in costs to Friant. That is to say, our future payments for CVP water *plus* new debt service are no more than what we pay now for the water.

The up-front money offer has uncertainties and, with conditional support from the Friant contractors to continue to explore its feasibility, Costa's bill moved out of committee and is destined to ultimately be heard on the House floor. However, it is clearly understood by Congressman Costa and the other sponsors that the Friant contractors expect to be provided the opportunity to approve the funding plan or conclude it to be unworkable prior to any further advancement of the bill. Also, Congressman Costa is spearheading an effort to strengthen the bill's water supply provisions to assuage concerns that, once given up to the River, the water supplies lost from the Friant region will never be made up.

In the recent push to move this bill through the legislative process while Congress is still in session, a lot of folks are leery that Friant districts might be pressured into acquiescing to Settlement legislation based on a hasty determination as to the proposed plan to front the money for its implementation and with little more than a lofty goal to make up for lost water. The TID Board of Directors shares some of these same concerns as others and, to that end, sent a letter expressing its reservations about moving too quickly on the bill to Kole Upton, Chairman of the Friant Water Users Authority. Copies were sent to Congressmen Radanovich, Costa, Cardoza and Senator Feinstein. Congressman Nunes, who has long voiced his concerns over this legislation, was also provided a copy of the letter.

MC KAY'S (continued from pg. 1)

snowmelt caused the 1958 flood prior to the construction of Terminus Dam in 1962.

After the great floods of 1862 and 1867, the head of the four creeks was changed a mile or two west of Lemon Cove and the St. John's and Lower Kaweah Rivers were formed just below McKay's Point. A diversion dam was attempted in 1869 to help the water flow, but failed after a few days. Then in 1870 a crude brush and rock dam came about where the two rivers divided—the first dam at McKay's Point. A concrete structure was then built at McKay's around 1908-1910 (later replaced after the flood of 1937).

According to Nora Pogue Montgomery, James William Pogue went into partnership with two San Francisco men, C.W. Crocker and W.B. Wallace, in 1874. They bought up land until they owned around 10,000 acres, taking in about all of the Lemon Cove area. Most of the land was railroad or government land for which they paid \$2.50 an acre. By 1892, the *Thompson Historical Atlas* shows the land where St. John's and Kaweah River divide as being owned by Mill Creek Water, Peoples Consolidated Ditch, and Kaweah Canal & Irrigation companies. The surrounding area was owned by W. H. Wallace.

Harry Ginner arrived in Lemon Cove from England around 1905. Ginner purchased property from the Indians on the north and south sides of Kaweah River. He and his father-in-law John Potier planted orange groves. In 1912, Ginner opened Terminus Beach on his south river property. The Visalia Electric Railroad passenger service came into Lemon Cove in 1907 and a few years later a branch line was built to Terminus Beach, making it a popular summer resort for Tulare County residents. A nine-hole golf course was also laid out across the river on the north side, reached by a swinging footbridge Ginner built in 1922. Ginner operated the resort until his death in 1928, at which time it was leased for several years, beginning with the Moore Brothers.

At some time while operating Terminus Beach it appears the Ginner family also purchased the property later known as McKay's (or McKay) Point Resort. This beach front recreational area was about a mile north of the old concrete pavement that runs through the citrus district at Lemon Cove. It was a popular spot for picnics in spring and fall, and mid-summer swimming parties.

Visalia Times-Delta coverage of the completed diversion structure at McKay's Point in February 1938 reported that it was owned by Tulare Irrigation District, Visalia and Kaweah Water Company, and Consolidated

People's Ditch Company, with no actual mention of McKay's Point Resort. The most recent recorded sale of the resort property (January 1954) listed Harry L. Ginner [Jr.] and Mildred Ginner as owners.

But it's possible McKay's Point Resort first opened and offered live musical entertainment by local orchestras and bands in 1922 with this advertisement.

McKay's Point was well equipped with every beach necessity. For a small deposit and rental fee, the resort provided table tennis, volley ball, balls and bats, beach balls, horse shoes, croquet, badminton, broilers and forks, tubes, towels, lockers, and even bathing suits and caps! "Don't Forget McKay's Point Opens This Afternoon"

Everyone will have the best swimming on the river, Best dance floor in the valley, and best music you ever danced to! It's just a mile west of Lemon Cove and half mile off The Highway, look for the sign.

Dances were being held on Saturday and Sunday nights. The Harmonizers were playing and there was a covered hardwood floor easy to dance on. Lunch and refreshments were also available.

In July 1922, the *Visalia Morning Delta* promoted an Elk's Patrol Dance. All Elks and friends were invited, \$1 admission payable at door. By 1926, advertisements promised fun times at both Terminus Beach and McKay's Point!

Terminus Beach, dancing every Thursday
Harmonizers 7-piece orchestra
The dance floor can be hired any other night
Of the week for private parties
Bridge Inn swimming and refreshments
Near Lemon Cove
McKay's Point
Swimming and refreshments

In its heyday, McKay's Point easily accommodated small or large groups for all types of events. Eva Cecil of Visalia, Beulah Baxter, Rosina Rafenstein, Bernice Bryan, and Alice Thorlwaldson, with their escorts, enjoyed a broiled steak dinner at McKay's Point. (May 1926) Employees of the Huntoon, Lovelace and Gilmer drug store were entertained with a picnic and swimming party at McKay's Point on the Kaweah River. Following a weenie roast and picnic supper, Mrs. Otis Kelly entertained with a number of ukulele solos. (July 1928). Eighteen Exeterites motored to McKay's Point on the Kaweah River Friday evening where they enjoyed a

(see MC KAY'S, next page)

MC KAY'S (continued from pg. 3)

swimming and picnic party. Those participating included Mr. and Mrs. Omar Jackson and daughter, Bernice; Mr. and Mrs. L.E. Hayes and son; Mr. and Mrs. S.C. Springer; Mr. and Mrs. W.F. Springer and daughter, Nourhalma; Mr. and Mrs. Leland Avery; Miss Marie Bacon; R.E. Patton; Garrett Van Nort; Lawrence Hunt; and Homer Ellsworth. (June 1933)

Terminus Beach experienced major flood damage in 1937. In early 1938, McKay's Point was designated as Tulare County's only public bathing beach outside of Bartlett Park near Springville. Joe F. Waddell was managing McKay's Point Resort at this time and was planning several improvements for the coming season. In mid-May Waddell made a special announcement of his taking over McKay's Point recreation center. Improvement plans included remodeling the bathhouse, installation of a septic tank, and cleaning up the grounds. No charge was to be made that year for those using the picnic tables or swimming, and safe water levels were expected within the coming weeks.

Apparently any diversion of water from the St. John's at McKay's Point into the Lower Kaweah did not affect swimming at the beach resort, but instead improved it! In July 1939, Waddell announced crowds were experiencing excellent swimming in clean, running water.

In fact, McKay's Point drew large crowds, young and old, wanting to escape the valley heat and cool off in the invigorating river water. But rushing currents from spring runoffs, jagged rocks, concrete weirs, underground water levels, and steep embankments could be a challenge to even the strongest swimmers.

Temperatures were rising up to 114 degrees in July 1950. Good business for any valley recreation spot, but dangerous swimming conditions for McKay's Point visitors. Richard Sahagian, a 17-year old Selma High School youth, was seriously injured after diving into the river rapids at McKay's Point and hitting the bottom. Sahagian was pulled from the water and taken by ambulance to the Exeter Memorial Hospital. The diagnosis was a broken neck and extensive paralysis.

In May 1951, 20-year-old Exeter youth Bobby Pierson drowned after being swept over the St. John's diversion weir at McKay's Point and presumably hitting his head on a rock. After heroic attempts by several, Pierson's swimming partner Gerald Henderson (on a 72-hour pass from the Army) was pulled to safety. Both young men had been diving off a board on the north bank of the river at McKay's Point swimming hole. The *Visalia Times-Delta* revealed that McKay's Point management

did not have jurisdiction over swimming and water sports where the drowning occurred, although the St. John's and Kaweah rivers were immediately adjacent to the point.

On a happier note, McKay's Point supported an active nightlife! Valley newspapers routinely ran exciting advertisements: "Wednesday Nite Dancing Under the Stars with Harold Bigard's Orchestra as main feature. Now, along with new floor, protection for your car and yourself, and fun for everyone! (June 1948)

"McKay's Point invites everyone to a smooth floor, smooth music, and open air dance every Wednesday and Saturday night." This July 1949 ad showed a couple in formal attire dancing to Harold Bigard and his orchestra. New low prices for men were Saturday 75-cents and 50-cents on Wednesday, plus Federal tax. Ladies were free!

Possibly following the latest trends, McKay's Point advertisements soon appeared more risqué. Readers were once again invited to dance the night with Harold Bigard and his orchestra. Admission was 50-cents for men, ladies free. Thursday, July 7th, was "Square Dancing Tonight! Everyone Welcome. Bring Your Party and Join the Fun!" However, the small artwork accompanying these ads showed a sexy woman facing front, wearing a skimpy top and only a "See you at McKay's!" banner across her lower waist area.

McKay's Point was host to the Visalia Fraternal Order of Eagles July 1949. According to chairman Bill Hobein, plans were set for a picnic at McKay's Point with a potluck at 7 pm, the lodge furnishing beverages. A membership contest was organized on a two-team basis. Dr. O.L. Jamison captained one team and Eddie Rich the other. The losing team would host the winners at a steak dinner later on.

In February 1950 Herman R. Hendrickson died at McKay's Point. Hendrickson had been the manager of McKay's Point for W.W. McCullough of Visalia since September 1945. Just a few days later, the *Visalia Times-Delta* Business Opportunity section read:

McKay's Point

Due to recent death of our resident manager, we are forced to offer for sale our lease, leasehold improvements and equipment at McKay's Point, largest and finest private amusement park in the valley. Well established, fully equipped. Ideal for couple or small family. Phone Mr. or Mrs. W. W. McCullough, Visalia 4-3472 or 4-7449. Courtesy to brokers.

(see MC KAY'S, next page)

MC KAY'S (continued from pg. 4)

March 1950, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Elliot of Visalia purchased the lease at McKay's Point from McCullough. McCullough had been operating McKay's Point for the past five years, and 4-1/2 years of that time the late Hendrickson had been his superintendent. McCullough had made improvements about the place such as increasing the parking space and landscaping the grounds. Elliot, owner of an upholstering business in Visalia, planned to move his wife and children to the grounds after remodeling some of the cottages.

Although once the site of an Indian village, Jesse Elliot was no doubt surprised a month later when workmen putting in a utility line discovered two skeletons in an excavation, about three feet below the surface of the ground, just back of the dance pavilion. Also unearthed were two stone acorn grinding mortars and a portion of a pestle. The skeletons were badly decomposed, but one skull was fairly complete and bore a fracture mark on top, making it appear the Indian may have died of the injury. Workmen said the Indian appeared to have been buried in a sitting position.

Nevertheless, groups and families enjoyed the summer of 1950 at McKay's Point. Navigators of the First Methodist Church met for a family picnic and swimming party. Kenneth Nelson was honored at a chicken dinner in celebration of his birthday. And the Married Couples' Club of the First Baptist Church held their regular monthly meeting with a family picnic and swim. McKay's Point was the site for more than 700 attending the annual Elks Lodge picnic in 1954 co-chaired by Bill Brinkerhoff and Art Bostwick. Along with a barbecue, Ladies of the Emblem Club and Boy Scouts worked to raise money for scout camp activities. Lifeguards and gate crews were on duty and Sheriff Sandy Robinson and Judge Noel McDermott served as targets for the dunking baseball concession.

Weather and water were two vital factors always affecting McKay's Point and the name Harry H. Holley was very well known to those interested in water flow along the Kaweah River. A Visalia resident since 1903, Holley was a recognized Visalia civil engineer, water expert, and Kaweah River Watermaster since 1935. But Holley had worked on the river and for river interests since around 1916. He established the measuring station at McKay's Point in October 1916 for the River Associations. Under his supervision the concrete twin dam was also completed in 1938, sending half of the Kaweah's water flow into the Lower Kaweah and half into the St. John's River. It was felt this dam was built

to stay, but Holley simply suggested, "When it goes out, then we had all better leave, for there will be entirely too much water."

Until 1940, Holley routinely made the 20-mile drive from Visalia to McKay's Point to check the river flow at the weir twice a day! In 1940, at a cost of about \$500 for equipment at McKay's Point and another \$40 for a short-wave receiver in his living room at 307 Green Acres Drive, Holley was able to tap in on the sometimes critical water levels of Kaweah River every hour, 24 hours a day if need be.

In December 1955, Terminus Beach and McKay's Point Resorts were both inundated with more rampaging flood waters! These recreational areas were now owned and operated by Carlo and Anneta Simoni, having just purchased McKay's Point from Harry L. Ginner (Jr.) in January 1954. Several of the cottages at McKay's Point hung perilously over the edge of the Kaweah River. Mrs. Simoni helped serve as a "citizen reporter" supplying the *Visalia Times-Delta* with flood updates, and was photographed for the newspaper's January 20, 1956 Special Flood Edition. Carlo and Anneta made several improvements and operated McKay's Point as a resort 1956-1959.

