

CCID OBSERVER

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA IRRIGATION DISTRICT • WWW.CCIDWATER.ORG • ISSUE ONE • 2010

CCID Annual Meetings March 23-25

CCID will again hold its annual public meetings to discuss issues of importance to CCID landowners and consumers.

All meetings include a catered dinner and will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

FIREBAUGH

Tuesday, March 23
Veterans Hall

LOS BANOS

Wednesday, March 24
Germino Building, Fairgrounds

GUSTINE

Thursday, March 25
Al Goman Center

Please call the CCID Main Office at (209) 826-1421 to reserve your space.

Bureau Declares "Non-Critical" Year for Exchange Contractors

■ DESPITE HEAVY SNOWPACK, CCID STILL FACES DELIVERY CHALLENGES BROUGHT ON BY UNCERTAIN DELTA SITUATION.



RECENT RAINS HAVE BROUGHT HEAVY SNOWPACK, WHICH SHOULD HELP INFLOWS INTO LAKE SHASTA EASILY EXCEED THE MINIMUM NEEDED FOR A 100-PERCENT ALLOCATION.

The Bureau of Reclamation in late February declared a "normal" water year for the Exchange Contractors based on projected in-flows into Lake Shasta well in excess of the 3.2 million acre-feet requirement to meet a 100-percent allocation for the District.

CCID General Manager Chris White said the District is much better off from a hydrology standpoint than the same time last year during which the Exchange Contractors was bracing for a "critical" year designation.

The Bureau will continue to re-examine the allocation monthly until May. However, The Department of Water Resources' recent snow survey projected 4.7 million acre-feet of runoff will flow into Lake Shasta based

on current snowpack, which is well in excess of the 3.2 million af needed.

"The hydrology looks really good; the regulatory environment looks really bad," White said. "There are several challenges facing the Bureau and its ability to deliver water from a regulatory standpoint that could impact our ability to deliver water to our consumers in a timely manner."

Based on recent endangered species biological opinions, questions remain about the ability to pump water through the San Joaquin-Sacramento Delta this spring, which could impact whether the Bureau might have to restrict summer deliveries, similar to 2008.

"Right now it looks like the deliveries this summer will occur normally and without restriction," White said. "The District will carefully monitor the situation and keep our customers informed."

"Given the uncertainty of the situation, we ask consumers in the District to continue maximizing the beneficial use of the District's surface water supplies."

2
RESTORATION ISSUES



3
DRAINAGE UPDATE

Progress on SJR Restoration Issues

■ DISTRICT CLOSE TO REACHING AGREEMENTS WITH SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM TO PROTECT CCID LANDOWNERS

CCID remains heavily involved on issues related to salmon restoration flows on the San Joaquin River in order to protect the District's San Joaquin River water rights, safeguard its facilities and protect landowners from operational and seepage impacts.

"We are in the process of simultaneously dealing with several issues related to San Joaquin River salmon restoration," said General Manager Chris White.

White said the District is close to achieving operational agreements with the Bureau of Reclamation and the Restoration Program that will protect facilities and implement seepage management plans to protect local landowners in advance of full releases. Negotiations have also yielded progress on agreements for the utilization of Mendota and Sack Dam.

CCID has dealt with environmental documents and



CCID OFFICIALS ARE STILL NEGOTIATING WITH THE SJR RESTORATION PROGRAM TO GAIN LIABILITY PROTECTIONS FOR THE DISTRICT FOR RELEASES FROM DISTRICT FACILITIES.

petitions filings to accomplish this year's interim flows. Initial interim flows started in October and ran through mid-November. They were halted for more than two months while the District conducted maintenance on Mendota Dam and resumed in early February.

White noted that in October more than 20,000 acre-feet of released flows seeped into the ground before

reaching the Mendota Pool.

"There were just huge seepage losses in that part of the river," he said.

While progress has been made on operational and seepage plans and mitigation, White noted that liability remains a sticking point.

The District and Restoration Program continue to work on a liability agreement that

will protect CCID and its landowners from any downstream consequences that may result from enhanced San Joaquin River flows through CCID facilities.

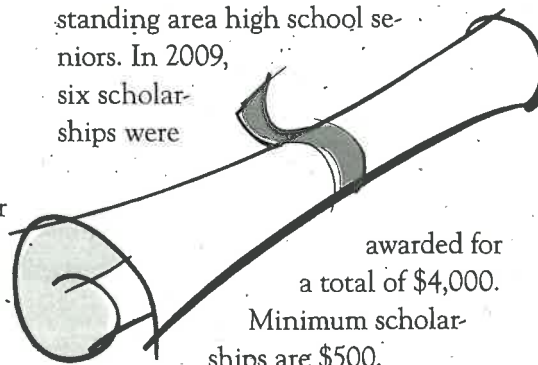
White added that he was "hopeful, though not optimistic" an additional operations agreement could be reached for assigning liability.

Scholarship Applications Due April 15

The CCID Board of Directors again this year is sponsoring scholarships for graduating high school students from the five school districts within the CCID service area. Scholarships are also open to all students whose parents or grandparents farm or own land in CCID or other Exchange Contractors member agencies, regardless of the location of their high school.

For the past 17 years, CCID Board members have sponsored the Water

Awareness Scholarship for outstanding area high school seniors. In 2009, six scholarships were



awarded for a total of \$4,000.

Minimum scholarships are \$500.

Applicants must have

a minimum 3.0 grade point average and submit a 300-word essay as part of the application packet by April 15. Winners will be selected by a Scholarship Committee designated by the CCID Board and announced in time for CCID's Water Awareness Month celebration in May. For details call the CCID Main Office at (209) 826-1421.

District Working on a Drainage Elimination Plan for Camp 13 Area of CCID

■ PLAN LOOKS TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO AFFECTED LANDOWNERS TO MEET LOOMING DRAINAGE DEADLINES.

Central California Irrigation District is working on a Camp 13 Drainage Elimination Plan that will help CCID landowners on 5,000 acres in the Camp 13 area of the Grasslands Basin address drainage issues in advance of a court-mandated deadline to halt drainage into the lower San Joaquin River.

Stakeholders in the Westside Regional Drainage Plan for years have pursued federal funding to fully implement capital projects to solve drainage issues on some 100,000 acres on the San Joaquin Valley's Westside. The Westside Regional Drainage Plan provides a workable alternative to a \$2.8 billion dollar federal plan to provide drainage solutions in the Grassland Area.

Local entities that put together the Westside Regional Drainage Plan are about a third of the way toward implementing its components, and as a result have cut in half drainage outflows in the area. Stakeholders were close to securing additional federal funding to further implement the plan's components when the new Administration

came into office in January 2009 and those negotiations stalled.

Under a recent court order, the Bureau recently submitted a plan to start spending relatively small sums of money on drainage projects in the San Luis Unit and on construction of a new pilot plant to test for treating saline tailwater in the region.

Still, CCID General Manager Chris White is concerned that those improvements may not come in time to solve drainage issues ahead of a court-mandated deadline for farmers to stop the use of the San Luis Drain.

Grassland Area Farmers are close to securing an extension on the Agreement for Use on the San Luis Drain, which expired at the end of 2009. However, in light of proposed water standards and fines, the 10-year extension realistically would only provide another six years of use for area farmers. Without the use agreement, drainage into the lower San Joaquin River would be eliminated and land in the area could no longer be farmed.

"Given the current situation, it is nearly impossible for capital improvements to be done in time for area farmers to meet drainage requirements," White said. "Our problem is

that the federal government is not moving fast enough in time to save these lands, and we are trying now to deal with this issue."

White said CCID is putting together a program for environmental review that will provide landowners some relief on the 5,000 acres within CCID boundaries. A draft proposal calls for the purchase and retirement, at least temporarily, of those affected lands in Camp 13.

"Our goal right now is to provide some certainty to those CCID landowners and not let this turn into a situation where the land becomes valueless because it can no longer be farmed," White said.

"We know currently that the land is farmable and valuable, so we are looking into purchasing those lands and retiring them, at least until the Drainage Plan is completed and perfected," he said.

Additional options are also being explored to find a long-term solution for landowners in light of the difficult situation, White said.

"Our goal right now is to provide some certainty to those CCID landowners and not let this turn into a situation where the land becomes valueless because it can no longer be farmed."

—Chris White, CCID

2010 Water Rate Schedule

CCCID is working to defend the water rights and local interests of its landowners against several ongoing-outside challenges. To continue providing long-term protection for District customers, the CCID Board of Directors this year added nearly \$500,000 to its budget to cover the cost of additional legal experts and outside consultants.

Based on the Bureau's recent "normal" water year declaration for the Exchange Contractors, the CCID Board of Directors voted to approve the following water rate and allocation schedule, which includes an increase of \$1 per acre-foot for all water sold to consumers, for both in-District and Class 2 lands.

In-District Water Sales

JAN. – MARCH: \$7 per acre-foot, no allocation limit

APRIL – OCT.: *Four-tiered water rate schedule:*

Tier 1 = 0.0 – 3.0 a.f. / acre @ \$7 / a.f.

Tier 2 = 3.0 – 3.5 a.f. / acre @ \$16 / a.f.

Tier 3 = 3.5 – 4.0 a.f. / acre @ \$31 / a.f.

Tier 4 = 4.0 a.f. / acre and up @ \$61 / a.f.

NOV. – DEC.: Limited supplies, first-come / first-served @ \$7 / a.f.

DEVELOPED WATER, CLASS 2 LANDS: Developed water for Class II lands is subject to tiered pricing when available from April through October at the rate of \$31/a.f. up to 3.0 a.f./acre and \$61/a.f. above 3.0 a.f./acre.

 **Clip and Save**



Important Phone Numbers for CCID Water Delivery Information

Water Operations Superintendent

Gerry Giesel (209) 777-8019

South Field Supervisor

Donald McCurdy (209) 777-8042

North Field Supervisor

Mark Gomez (209) 777-8022

CANAL WORKERS:

Section 1

Mike Marshall (209) 777-8011

Saul Ruiz (209) 756-8011

Section 2

Rick Diaz (209) 777-8012

Pedro Eguia (209) 756-8012

Section 3

Stanley Holmes (209) 777-8013

Brian Pereira (209) 756-8013

Section 4

Angel Martinez (209) 777-8014

Daniel Jimenez (209) 761-4014

Section 5

Danny Lopez (209) 756-8015

Joel Beltran (209) 777-8015

Section 6

Joe Machado (209) 777-8016

Rick Menezes (209) 761-8016

Section 7

Mike Azevedo (209) 777-8017

Dennis Borges (209) 761-2017

Section 8

Victor Romero (209) 777-8018

Robert Walsh (209) 761-8018

Important Changes to CCID Conservation Program

CCID growers interested in securing matching grant and loan funds under the District's On-Farm Water Conservation Program should be aware of important changes in the application process for the program this year.

The District will once again go to a single sign up deadline for all Program applications in 2010. Applications, which must include a project design and cost estimate, are due in the CCID office no later than Aug. 13.

CCID Conservation Coordinator Tracey Rosin said the change was necessary to help manage the overwhelming demand for assistance from the Program by CCID landowners.

"CCID landowners are very focused on maximizing the beneficial use of our water resources. As a result, we received a landslide number of applications for our On-Farm Water Conservation Program in 2009," Rosin said. "We are making changes this year to allow the District to rebuild program funds and streamline the application process."

Once applications are received Aug. 13, Rosin said they will be processed and reviewed collectively in time for October construction.

CCID's Water Conservation Program provides matching grants and

low-interest loans to support on-farm and community ditch projects. The Program provides 25-percent cost-share grants for irrigation enhancements, including microsprinklers, drip systems, tailwater return systems and dairy-related projects, up to \$400 per acre benefitted. Cost-shares of 50-percent up to \$400 per acre are available for ditch and pipeline improvements.



CCID WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM WORKS WITH DISTRICT CUSTOMERS TO HELP FINANCE MICRO-IRRIGATION INSTALLATIONS AND OTHER WATER CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENTS.

The program also provides 3-percent interest loans, up to \$1,000 per acre benefitted, to cover the farmer's portion after the cost-share grant.

The loan program was created in 1990 and expanded to include matching grant funds in 1999. Last year demand for the program was so strong the District for the first year prorated loans equally among approved practices rather than turn away eligible projects.

Rosin advised that funding levels might again be prorated depending on available funds and demand. She encouraged landowners to call with questions and follow the steps in the related CCID Observer article to avoid jeopardizing project funding.

Conservation Program Step-by-Step

Simple steps to participating in the CCID Water Conservation Program:

1 Fill out application from CCID office. Submit application with design and cost estimate for the intended project by Aug. 13, 2010.

2 The District's Water Conservation Committee will review water use history and projected water savings and grant the projects preliminary approval.

3 Once preliminary approval is granted, submit a construction schedule to the CCID Conservation Coordinator.

4 Any changes to design that come after preliminary approval should be forward to CCID Conservation Coordinator Tracey Rosin.

5 CCID conducts engineering evaluation on design and issues notice to construct.

6 Schedule periodic inspections throughout the course of construction with CCID Conservation Coordinator.

7 Arrange final inspection of completed project. Board of Directors will disperse funds upon approval of final inspection.

"There are a lot of new landowners in the District using the Conservation Program for the first time and we are anxious to work with them to help them understand how the program works and the steps they can take to help the application and construction process flow as smoothly as possible," Rosin said.



Post Office Box 1231
Los Banos, CA 93635
209 / 826-1421

Prsrt Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fresno, CA
Permit #1242

A look back...



50 Years Ago – Winter 1960

Rainfall into Shasta was about 70% with sufficient runoff to give CCID a normal water year. Steel strike forces District to postpone purchase of new vehicles. Discussions continued on proposed construction of the Master Valley Drain with concerns that the drain would not be in operation until 1971.

25 Years Ago – Winter 1985

Water rates were set for 1985 @ \$7 per acre-foot for In-District water and \$14 per acre-foot for Developed Water. An additional minimum charge of \$2 per acre was applied to all land in the District. The Badger Flat Ditch group met and agreed to line 3,800 lf of concrete ditch adjacent to the Los Banos Creek.

10 Years Ago – Winter 2000

The Board adopted revisions to the District's Rules Governing Pumping of Private Wells for Water Credits in Other Districts. The stated intent of the policy was to allow CCID landowners and consumers who farm in other districts to assist themselves but not to promote water sales or marketing to others.