

# CCID OBSERVER

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA IRRIGATION DISTRICT • WWW.CCIDWATER.ORG • ISSUE ONE • 2018

## Bureau declares ‘non-critical’ year; 100 percent allocation announced

“Thank goodness for the rainfall in March.”

That comment at the recent CCID Growers Meeting prompted a round of applause as CCID General Manager Chris White talked about a projected 100 percent of contracted water deliveries for the current year.

White identified the inflow of water into Shasta Reservoir as key to the reservoir’s rising level that opened the door for the Bureau of Reclamation to announce a

“non-critical” year, resulting in the 100 percent allocation.

“The Bureau continues with a monthly assessment of the allocation and there is always a possibility that the 100 percent allocation could change,” said White, prior to the Growers Meeting. “But the reality of that happening is lessening as time goes by and periodic storms sweep through the north state.”

“There is very little chance that Exchange Contract water will be required from

Millerton Reservoir behind Friant Dam,” said White, in reference to the water storage conditions in Shasta Reservoir. As of April 15, 2018, Shasta Reservoir was at 90 percent capacity with 4.1 million acre-feet.

White acknowledged that Westside Central Valley Project water users will only receive 20 percent of their contracted supply because of the “uncertainty” of environmental regulations. He expressed hope that the allocation could soon be increased.



CCID GENERAL MANAGER CHRIS WHITE ADDRESSES THE ATTENDEES AT A RECENT GROWERS MEETING AND PRESENTS GOOD NEWS FOR 2018 WATER DELIVERIES.

CCID 2018 Normal Year Water Rates		
January through October 31		
Tier 1	\$13.00	0' – 3.2'
Tier 2	\$40.00	3.21' – 3.70'
Tier 3	\$95.00	3.71' & UP
November and December		
NO TIER	\$13.00	As Available



A PORTION OF THE CROWD THAT ATTENDED THE RECENT CCID GROWERS MEETING.

**2**  
CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT



**3**  
RED TOP PUMPING AGREEMENT

# Watching successful people leads to water-efficient orchard

**D**ennis Soares lives by an adage he learned early in his career ~ “Watch what successful people are doing and then learn from them.”

During the 1990s he witnessed farms beginning to switch their operations from field crops to almonds and decided there were too many advantages to pass up. So, he decided to leave 21 years of experience working for Anderson & Clayton Company as vice-president of Northern Operations California to jump into the almond business, along with his wife Janet.

## From Cotton to Almonds

“It was a challenging decision to make but all the factors pointed to a switch,” says Soares, “less employees and less machinery equipment trips up and down the field.”

“Prior to Roundup-ready crops, farmers were performing multiple cultural operations in the fields and creating compaction in the soil,” he explains. “We still do some compacting of the soil in the almonds to minimize the dirt when we sweep up the almonds.”



THIRD-LEAF ALMOND TREES STAND IN LINE.

Soares eventually partnered with David and Paul Parreira at RPAC Almond Handler & Processor as a Managing Partner. In addition to the group’s almond plantings, Soares also has acreage in partnership with Janet as Soares Farms.

Four years ago the husband-wife partnership purchased 59 acres that had been harvested of its corn crop. Following harvest, the ground was left idle for a year before the planting of 7,200 almond trees on a 16’ x 22’ spacing in October 2016.

“We worked the organic material into the field, along with 6 tons of manure compost as we prepared to plant the trees,” he recalls. “In addition to adding the nutrients to the soil, the organic material also helps to hold the moisture in the ground.”

The availability and cost of water was an important part of the decision to purchase the acreage. The field is adjacent to the Outside Canal operated by the Central California Irrigation District.

## Water Price Drops

“We are so fortunate to be in CCID,” Soares emphasizes. “The reliability of receiving water throughout the growing season at a reasonable cost is important for any farmer.”

Soares also applied for a grant from CCID’s “On-Farm Water Conservation Program” to partially finance the installation of his irrigation system on the 56 acres planted to almonds.

“It’s a great program and there was no hesitancy on our part to apply,” he says. “I’m not real computer savvy but Tracey (Rosin, CCID’s Conservation Coordinator) walked me through the on-line process for the application.

“Farmers within the CCID are extremely fortunate to have this program available to us.”

Soares contracted with Gene Blocker of Landmark Irrigation to not only install the irrigation system but to also plant, prune and tie the trees, as well as consulting.

## Trees from Sierra Gold

Alternate rows of the orchard are planted to Nonpareil and Monterey varieties. Both are planted on an Emperian 1 rootstock developed by Sierra Gold Nursery.

“I’ve noticed that these traditional varieties usually perform well,” he adds. “This is the first time I planted trees from Sierra Gold. Orchards planted with their trees have always looked good to me; so, I made the decision to go with them.”



A BENEFIT TO PURCHASE THE ACREAGE FOR DENNIS SOARES WAS ITS CLOSE LOCATION TO THE CCID OUTSIDE CANAL.

The decision was not the easiest, especially with a neighboring orchard planted to the new Independence variety. Independence requires less bees for pollination and features a one-time harvest that could reach 1,000 pounds per acre at third leaf. Traditional varieties like the Nonpareil and Monterey are expected to yield 300-700 pounds in their third year.

A drive along the end of Soares’ orchard reveals three rows of irrigation hose on top of each berm. One row features micro-sprinklers placed next to each tree that were used to grow the trees during their first two years. The sprinklers will soon be moved to the middles between the trees.



THREE HOSES ARE POSITIONED ON TOP OF EACH ROW OF TREES.

Continued on next page

# Red Top pumping agreement already slowing subsidence

An agreement to reduce the pumping of groundwater and replacing it with surface water purchased from other districts and delivered by CCID has already resulted in a slowing of subsidence in the Red Top area just outside of the district and at Sack Dam.



GROUNDWATER RECHARGING IN RED TOP

Discussions have been ongoing with several individual landowners in the area that has formed the Triangle T Water District. The results of those talks have been an agreement to voluntarily reduce the pumping of groundwater in exchange for a pipeline constructed at CCID expense to deliver water that the new water district purchases.

“The new agreement allows them to go out on the market and buy transfer water and have it delivered through the pipeline under the river,” explained CCID General Manager Chris White. “They have purchased more than 5,000 acre-feet and delivery through the

pipeline has begun.”

“As a result of the agreement, we have seen a significant reduction in the rate of subsidence that affects our facilities and Sack Dam. Previously, subsidence at Sack Dam was recorded at a rate of one-half-foot per year three years ago. It is now less than two inches per year.”

The agreement establishes a five-year schedule to limit groundwater pumping from the deep aquifer. The ultimate goal is to reach 1/2-acre foot per acre per year reduction in five years. The agreement also establishes an independent expert panel to review numbers and make recommendations for shallow and deep pumping, based on water demand.

Landowners within the new district will follow 3 percent of their lands for the purpose of creating percolation or recharge basins.

## Watching successful people leads to water-efficient orchard

*Continued from previous page*

The remaining two rows of hoses include drip emitters that will work toward spreading the root system for each tree.

“I spent extra to have both systems. The cost, along with the drip system filters, was about \$2500 per acre,” he admits. “That’s where the CCID grant really helped.”

Costs also mounted after the planting of the “potted” trees because of the Santa Nella-area winds that come off the Coastal Range to the west and whip across the fields.

“The trees were planted with bamboo stakes, but it didn’t take long for the winds to bend the heavily leafed trees,” explains Soares. “A metal stake was added to the right of the tree and eventually a second metal stake was placed to the left of the tree.”

The benefit of adding the two stakes and multiple pruning events is easily seen today with a bowl-shaped canopy.

“The sun will be able to shine in the middle of the tree and we should get some long-term fruit-setting on the inside,” he says.

### Family Business

Janet handles all the bookkeeping for the multiple partnerships that they have. Dennis and Janet can only dream of their two children returning to the farm; knowing their careers will likely take them in a different direction. Their son, Dylan, is currently attending Harvard Law School with a focus on water law. He previously received an Ag Engineering Degree from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Daughter Christina also attended Cal Poly and received a degree in Viticulture and Enology. She is presently working for

Talley Winery and plans on applying for a Master’s program in International Marketing.

Dennis’ advice to their children as they move forward with their studies ~ “Always stay focused in a positive direction.”

**Deadline**  
**August 10, 2018**

Conservation Program  
Step-by-Step

Fill out application on-line or in the office and submit with project design and cost estimate by deadline

All projects will be reviewed by the Water Conservation Committee for preliminary approval

Once notified of approval, submit construction schedule to CCID

Any changes to submitted design **MUST** be provided to CCID *prior* to construction

Upon completion of engineering evaluation, notice to construct will be issued

Periodic inspections throughout construction will be done by CCID

After final inspection, bills are submitted

Completed projects are presented to the Board of Directors and funds are disbursed to the Landowner

For Questions or More Information  
Please contact:  
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## 2018 On-Farm Water Conservation Program

The Water Conservation Program deadline for funding requests is August 10, 2018. A project design and cost estimate must be submitted prior to the deadline date to be considered for preliminary approval. All applications will be processed and reviewed collectively in time for October construction. Water Conservation Program Guidelines are available on-line at [www.ccidwater.org](http://www.ccidwater.org). Funding levels may be pro-rated based on the number of applications received.

**DEADLINE AUGUST 10, 2018**

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**GRANT PROGRAM**

**50% cost-share**  
for all Concrete Lining or Pipelining up to **\$400/acre** benefited

**25% cost-share**  
for irrigation enhancements up to **\$400/acre** benefited such as:  
Tailwater Return Systems, Micro-Sprinklers, Drip Systems, Dairy related projects, other irrigation efficiency improvements

**LOAN PROGRAM**

3% interest loans up to \$1000/acre benefited for farmer’s portion after cost-share grant.

One annual payment per year

5 year term for on-farm systems 10 year term for community ditches

Contact your local FSA office for additional funding options



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## *A look back...*



### ***50 Years Ago – Spring 1968***

- Harry G. Fawcett was recognized with a Board Resolution for having been a leader through the formative years of Central California Irrigation District and serving as a Director of Division #3, including as President from 1962 until his passing in April of 1968. Mr. Fawcett was an honored, respected man who was a faithful and dedicated public servant.

### ***25 Years Ago – Spring 1993***

- The first part of 1993 saw the announcement of a normal water allocation of 3.1 a.f. per acre comprised of 2.75 a.f. per acre of Bureau surface water and 0.35 a.f. per acre of well water developed from District wells. A three-tier water rate was established of \$8.00 per a.f. for Bureau water, \$25.00 per a.f. for developed water and \$40.00 per a.f. for purchased water. The formation of the CCID Scholarship Committee, completely funded by its Directors through their donations, began with \$500 being offered to area high school seniors.

### ***10 Years Ago – Spring 2007***

- The Shasta Reservoir was at 71% of average and pumping restrictions were in effect due to the Delta Smelt, causing a Federal pumping reduction from three pumping units and 2,649 c.f.s. to one unit for about 1,000 c.f.s. It was anticipated that reduced pumping would remain in effect until mid-June and potentially impact water deliveries to the Exchange Contractors.