

CCID OBSERVER

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA IRRIGATION DISTRICT • WWW.CCIDWATER.ORG • ISSUE ONE • 2022

2022 DECLARED CRITICAL FOR CCID

On February 16th, the Bureau of Reclamation provided notice to CCID that it will receive a Critical Allocation under the Exchange Contract. “We began the 2022 water year with low CVP reservoir storage and some weather whiplash, starting with a record day of Sacramento rainfall in October and snow-packed December storms to a very dry January and February, which are on pace to be the driest on record,” said Regional Director Ernest Conant. “Further, the December storms disproportionately played out this year in the headwaters—heavy in the American River Basin and unfortunately light in the upper Sacramento River Basin, which feeds into Shasta Reservoir, the cornerstone of the CVP.”

Reclamation made the following allocations: 75% for the Exchange Contractors, 15% for Friant Class 1 Contractors, and 0% for South of Delta Ag Service Contractors. DWR also announced a 15% allocation for its contractors south of the Delta.

Much like last year, CCID will be engaged with water users across the state to put a hydrograph together that works. While each water year has its own unique challenges, we have the experience and plan from 2021 to help guide operational decisions. The District will keep you up to date as this water year unfolds.

A NOTE ON THE 2022 WATER YEAR FROM CCID'S BOARD PRESIDENT

I sit here writing this introduction to the water year with mixed emotion. As the newly elected President of CCID, I look forward to leading the board and continuing the successes of CCID and the rich history that goes along with our District. The mixed emotion comes with sitting in the seat that so many great men have sat before me, most recently Mr. Jim O'Banion who had provided wisdom and leadership to this Board of Directors for so many years until his passing last year. What started out as a promising water year at the end of December has turned into a very unpredictable, challenging, and critical water year. I am confident that our management team, legal counsel, and the very reliable consultants, will give us information to guide the District through a second consecutive critical year, all the while maintaining water quality, keeping our water rates low, and operating within our budget. The Board is dedicated to conserving water through existing water conservation programs and also storage and water recharge projects that are in various phases of construction. All of these efforts are rooted in securing dry year reliability and water supply certainty. CCID is eager to continue working closely with the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority with the intent of preserving and defending our most valuable water rights. To learn more about water supply, existing and in-progress projects, among other valuable District information, please plan on attending our in-person grower meeting on March 29.

Eric Fontana
President, CCID Board of Directors

2022 Grower Meeting In Person

Mark your calendar for the upcoming Annual Grower Meeting on March 29 at the Los Banos Fairgrounds in the O'Banion Building. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. followed by a presentation on important topics for 2022.

- Water Supply Update
- District Operations
- SJRECWA Activities
 - SGMA
 - And More

Please call the CCID Main Office at (209) 826-1421 by March 24th to reserve your seat

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A SUCCESS STORY



3
2021 RECAP

A SUCCESS STORY

THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE CCID CONSERVATION PROGRAM

To illuminate the beginning of the Water Conservation Program, let's review the history of what we're conserving. CCID, through the Exchange Contract, holds Pre-1914 Appropriative and Riparian Water Rights with the obligation to distribute that water to the ground that falls within its boundaries. These water rights are held in trust for those lands and this responsibility is not taken lightly. One of the most important tasks for the Board of Directors is to protect and defend those water rights to ensure that the farmers in CCID will have reliable irrigation for their crops while providing a sustainable future for farming in this region and the communities and industries dependent on production agriculture. In the late 1980's, it was apparent that the Central Valley Project (CVP) was changing, particularly for the Federal Ag Districts south of the Delta. With the adoption of the Central Valley Improvement Project and subsequent Biological Opinions, water reliability was declining and conservation was encouraged to make up some of the shortfall. CCID faced a dichotomy of more efficiently delivering water through our canals and across farm fields while not drastically increasing our cost of service. The value of farming within the Exchange Contractors was even more pronounced. We can thank Henry Miller for the foresight to develop and secure our San Joaquin River Water Rights, along with constructing the Mendota Dam and the vast canal system that are all still operational over 100 years later.

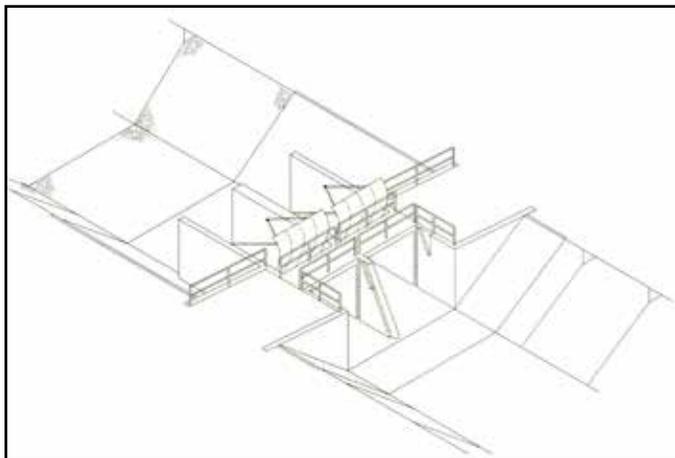
In 1989, CCID implemented a tiered water pricing program to encourage water conservation. The proceeds from the higher cost water would be borne by the biggest users, and the money would be made available to all growers in the form of a low interest loan to help pay for water conservation projects. We knew the ingenuity of our farmers was our greatest asset, and if given an incentive, they would come up with a way to conserve water. The vision was to document actual conserved



Outside Canal Construction, 1879

water and then embark on a program to transfer some of that conserved water to our neighbors in other districts while using the proceeds to further enhance our conservation program. Our water rights dating back to the 1870's means our infrastructure was constructed in a time before the days of horse-drawn Fresno Scrapers and could use some upgrading to more efficiently and effectively deliver water. The question we asked ourselves was "Can we conserve more water by capturing spills and pumping that water back into our canal system as a way to document a conserved transfer program that could provide a water supply benefit to the region?" The answer was a resounding YES, and our conserved transfer program was born partnering with the wildlife refuges and our neighboring CVP Ag Districts. The proceeds of the transfer focused on investing in water conservation at the District and grower levels. CCID started to heavily invest in automating and modernizing our system for the benefit of all growers by providing flexibility and reliability in our system while drastically reducing operational spills (District Level Conservation). The remaining proceeds were invested in a separate fund for on-farm water conservation projects. Investing in conservation at the grower level was an extra incentive that would conserve water and potentially increase profitability through higher crop yields and reduced labor.

In the next newsletter, we will expand on how transfers provide a solid platform to increase critical year reliability.



Modernized Weir, 1997

2021 RECAP

The year started off great with a major storm in January dropping much needed precipitation on a thirsty California. January also brought a new Federal Administration with Joe Biden swearing the Presidential Oath of Office.

Fast forward to February, and we quickly watched our anticipated water supply melt away into the volcanic rock in Northern California. In the month of April alone, the actual inflow for the CVP came in 500,000 AF below the April 1st projection. The final inflow to Shasta is the lowest we have seen over the last century. We were on the cusp of running out of water in San Luis Reservoir and Lake Oroville. This reality was unprecedented and the water users across the state worked together with DWR and USBR on an operations plan to make the hydrograph work. The result was an operation that provided CCID farmers with the entire Critical Year allocation.

Some other notable accomplishments include:

- Water rates remained the same as they were in 2015, the last Critical Water Year
- With the help from our growers, we were able to meet all supplemental water requests
- We brought back 1,500 AF from one of our projects and were able to sell that to our Class 2 landowners
- Trials to better control algae in our system proved successful and will be further implemented in 2022
- The layout of our invoices has been significantly improved and combines water sales and other miscellaneous expenses into one monthly bill.
- The District now offers an online credit card payment option

2022 LOOKING FORWARD

In the first two months of the year, the Board of Directors has authorized and adopted environmental coverage through CEQA for 1) A District solar project to offset annual budget costs by \$400,000, 2) Use of Copper to control algae in our canals and 3) Expanding the Orestimba Creek Recharge Project to 80 acres. These three projects are fundamental to keeping our water rates low, improving water delivery to our farms and increasing water supply in Critical Years.

CCID WATER AWARENESS SCHOLARSHIP

Applications Available Now

The CCID Board of Directors continues to sponsor this scholarship program, funded by Directors and growers from the District. This scholarship is intended to help students further their education and help offset tuition and book expenses. In 2021, ten scholarships were awarded for a total of \$8,250. In order to qualify, students must be a graduating senior from (1) one of the five school districts within CCID service area, or (2) from any high school, if the student's parents or grandparents either farm or own land within CCID or in any of the other member agencies of the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors.

Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 grade point average and submit a 300-word essay as part of the application packet by April 8, 2022. Winners will be selected by the Scholarship Committee designated by the Board of Directors and announced in time for CCID's Water Awareness Month, celebrated in May. For details contact the CCID Main Office at (209) 826-1421 or our website at www.ccidwater.org





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A look back...



50 Years Ago – Spring 1972

- With the driest January and February since 1931, considerable difficulty was being encountered with meeting water demands. It was also reported that every effort was being made to restrict irrigation to perishable crops such as grains, safflower and new alfalfa. Some irrigation in the north end of the District was being made from District wells.

25 Years Ago – Spring 1997

- The Board reviewed a Stoddard and Associates feasibility study to automate the north end of the District's system. Automating the weirs in this area and changing the control from upstream to downstream would address system fluctuations, metering difficulties and spills as well as resulting in significant water savings. Assistant Manager Chris White reported that Dr. Burt from Cal Poly would be reviewing a model of this project and report back to the Board.

10 Years Ago – Spring 2012

- Bureau of Reclamation had money available for agricultural and efficiency grants under the Bay-Delta Restoration Program. Applications were submitted for \$500,000 each for two proposed surface water storage reservoirs in the South Division; on the Poso Canal near the head of the Santa Rita and the East Ditch near the Parson Canal. The estimated cost for both projects was \$4,500,000 and would enable the District's South Division to better accommodate the increasing number of drip systems.