

# Oakdale Irrigation District Newsletter

1205 East F Street  
Oakdale, CA 95361

June 2002

## OID Gets A New General Manager

Mr. Steve Knell assumed the duties of General Manager for Oakdale Irrigation District on January 2, 2002. Mr. Knell comes to OID after a 15-year career at Imperial Irrigation District in the southeastern area of California. During his last three years at IID, Mr. Knell served as a Special Projects Coordinator in IID'S Water Resources Management and Planning Department. His assignment was managing the preparation of the environmental documents (EIR/EIS) and development of the Habitat Conservation Plan to support the 300,000 acre-foot water transfer from IID to the San Diego Water Authority. Prior to that and

during his 15 years at IID, Mr. Knell held positions that included General Superintendent of Maintenance Operations, General Superintendent of Drainage and Water Quality, Supervisor Engineering Department and Project Engineer.

The United States Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service employed Mr. Knell for eight years prior to his working at IID. He served as a field office engineer in Santa Barbara, Red Bluff, Madera and Bishop prior to assuming the duties as an Irrigation and Drainage Engineer in the El Centro field office. Prior to complet-

ing his college education, Mr. Knell spent 2 years working overseas in the agriculture and construction areas.

Mr. Knell is joined by his wife Kim and their two daughters, Katie (14) and Lauren (12).



General Manager  
Steve Knell

## Water Delivery at OID

Water delivery at OID is not on a demand basis like other utility services such as gas, electricity and sewer. OID delivers water on what is called a "fixed rotation water schedule." Starting out in the first of the water season, which begins in late March or early April, the rotation is every 14 days. That is to say, every 14 days an OID ditchtender will contact our service customers to determine their need for water. If you elect to "pass" on that date and time, you will not be able to receive water until

the rotation returns to you in 14 days. OID "normally" delivers water for irrigation on a 14-day rotation through April, starting a 12-day rotation in early May and into the first week of July, then going to a 10-day rotation through the hot days of summer. In late summer, the rotation days begin increasing again until the water season ends.

*OID is not on a demand basis like other utility services such as gas, electricity and sewer.*



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### Special points of interest:

- Payment Reminder
- OID Reorganization
- OID Board of Directors
- Ditchtender List for 2002 Water Season

## Where Does OID'S Major Operating Revenues Come From?

The surprising answer to that question is, it's not irrigation water! As hard as it is to believe, OID'S major source of revenue, is not through the sale of irrigation water to its customers. Power sales from OID'S and South San Joaquin Irrigation District's Tri-Dam Project make up 32% of OID'S income. Income from water transfers to the Stockton East Water District and the Bureau of Reclamation under the VAMP program make up the second largest block of revenue at 25%. Water sales make up 20%, while county tax appropriations make up 12%, followed by Interest Revenues (6%), Residential Water Revenue (1%) and Miscellaneous (1%).

So what does that mean? It means by investing wisely, OID Boards have been able to make decisions that help keep water costs low. Without such investments, the "true cost" to customers for actual water charges would be \$144 per acre (for parcels greater than ten acres) instead of the current rate of

\$24.50. OID'S current Board believes that maintaining water rates as low as reasonably possible helps benefit both agriculture and the community.

**OID'S major revenue source is NOT charges for irrigation water.**

### Water Service Fee Abolished for 2003

Recently, OID'S Board approved abolishing the Water Service Fee for the year 2003. This fee was charged to all parcels that received irrigation water from OID. This action resulted in a 14.3% reduction in OID'S overall water charges.

### Mission Statement

*The Oakdale Irrigation District strives to provide dependable irrigation and domestic water service to its constituents at the lowest and most efficient cost possible. The District is committed to excellence in resource management and all aspects of its operation.*

*Within the scope of the Districts enabling legislation, we seek to accomplish what cannot be done effectively on an individual basis. We are a creation and extension of the people of the community. We are obligated to serve the public interest throughout our functions.*

January 30, 1995

*"OID is a creation and extension of the people of the community."*

## Maintaining and Protecting our Water

**OID IS CHARGED UNDER THE CALIFORNIA WATER CODE TO INSURE THAT WATER IS USED WISELY**

OID and its agricultural community are fortunate to have senior water rights on the Stanislaus River. As background, both South San Joaquin Irrigation District and OID share an equal entitlement of 600,000 acre-feet on the Stanislaus River, 300,000 acre-feet going to each district. Our area's continued use of that senior right is predicated on our (OID and its customers) ability to put that water to "reasonable and beneficial uses."

Water running down the sides of the roadways, flooding signs along roadways, neighbors complaining to ditchtenders about their neighbors unattended irrigations, flooding of adjacent property, etc. are all affronts to

that "reasonable and beneficial use" standard. OID, as an irrigation district, is charged under the California Water Code to insure that water is used wisely. We intend to honor that obligation even more as we move forward. OID has sent and will continue to send letters to those who violate this standard with a warning that wasteful use of water will not be tolerated. Continued violators can and will be cut-off from all water service if corrective measures are not taken. This may seem like harsh actions, but the consequence of our community losing ANY water right as a result of the negligent actions of a few is

not acceptable.

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that water will become an ever-increasing valuable commodity in California. As it does, OID, as well as other irrigation districts around the state, will come under increasing pressures to be better and better water managers. Our best defense in maintaining our water rights is the reasonable and prudent application of water. We ask that you all do your part in helping us protect the cornerstone of our community and our livelihood, our water.

## OID Reorganization

The Board of Directors concurred with the General Manager that the need to move forward with a sequential reorganization of the OID was warranted, both to improve the operational efficiency of the organization and to better address customer needs. Not that the public will see rapid changes in the near-term, but down the road OID and its employees hope to show the public a more improved and focused work force in providing water delivery services.

In the first step of the reorganization, OID will be cutting various unfilled and redundant

job positions. It will also be offsetting that by creating other responsible positions that more fully address the focus change of the organization. That focus change is to create a workforce that not only has accountability but employs the mechanisms by which employees take a greater role in insuring that the needs of the district and the service needs of the customers are being met. The greatest asset of any company is its employee base and the best way to involve employees in meeting the business needs of the company is to involve them more in the business. That is the focus of OID'S reorganization.

During this first phase of implementation, OID will be reducing its overall workforce by one position and reducing its labor budget by \$28,500. Other changes may come later, but first OID intends to implement its Phase I changes, test the new arrangements, get the employees comfortable with the changes, listen for customer feedback, measure those changes in efficiency that are measurable and then consider what other avenues it might take.

*OID WILL BE  
REDUCING  
ITS OVERALL  
WORKFORCE  
BY ONE  
POSITION  
AND  
REDUCING  
ITS LABOR  
BUDGET BY  
\$28,500*

## Completion of the Robert Van Lier Regulating Reservoir

*This is a  
major  
accomplishment  
for OID'S  
water  
conservation pro-  
gram*

A major accomplishment for OID'S water conservation program was the completion of a regulating reservoir on OID'S South Main Canal, now called the Robert Van Lier Regulating Reservoir. Major construction was finished just in time to begin filling the reservoir for this water season. Minor construction

is still occurring and a SCADA system will be installed shortly to automate the system for consistent downstream deliveries. Prior to completion of the reservoir, it took up to 12 hours for water flows to increase or decrease at this location in the South Main Canal. Now the district will be able to store or re-

lease water in response to customer needs more quickly by virtue of having this reservoir.



## Tri-Dam Relicensing Status

One of the most critical near-term demands on OID'S Board is deciding on a strategy for the share of electrical power it will receive after relicensing of the Tri-Dam facility is completed in 2004.

As background, South San Joaquin and Oakdale Irrigation Districts jointly created and administer the Tri-Dam Project, which is an organization charged with operating and maintaining the district's jointly owned water storage

facilities along the Stanislaus River. Those facilities include Tulloch, Beardsley and Donnell Dams. Applications for power generation were filed by the districts on Beardsley and Donnell Dams in 1948 and a license was received in 1949. In 1952 PG&E entered into a contract with the irrigation districts to provide for the purchase of the electrical power during the term of the FERC license. Under the terms of the contract, PG&E received all power gener-

ated. The license for this "upper" Project and the power contracts between PG&E and the districts expires December 31, 2004. Upon relicensing, the power generation capabilities of the facilities will be in the names of SSJID and OID.

The OID Board hired the power-consulting firm of R.W. Beck to prepare an options report. The options report will out-

line the potential paths the district might take post-relicensing of the power facilities. SSJID is also moving along a similar decision path. The options report should be completed in mid-June.

*"Power generation capabilities will be in the names of SSJID and OID"*

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## Oakdale Irrigation District Board of Directors



**Division 5**  
**Jack Alpers**  
863-1522



**Division 4**  
**Louis Brichetto**  
847-8965



**Division 1**  
**Frank Clark**  
845-2895



**Division 2**  
**Tony Taro**  
838-1868



**Division 3**  
**Steve Webb**  
847-4737

### Strategic Planning Effort Undertaken by OID'S Board of Directors

Two evening workshops (March 4 and 11, 2002) were held by the Board of Directors and the public to solicit issues and concerns regarding the future direction of the Oakdale Irrigation District. Resource issues as they relate to water rights protection, conservation, water reclamation, water quality, and power were high on the Board's list of issues. From that effort, OID will seek the services of a qualified consultant to assist staff in the development of a strategic plan. The consultant will assist OID in evaluating, refining and developing the visions expressed by OID'S Board and the public into a quantifiable planning document.

Upon review and formal approval by the Board, the document will provide the organization's mission with the stature it needs. The strategic plan will become the planning document identifying the sequencing of steps OID will take to fulfill its mission statement. Moreover the strategic plan will put on record the benchmarks used to evaluate performance on each direction the Board has determined the organization should precede. The plan will inherently set the framework for staff and the Board to look back in a year's time to evaluate progress.

### PAYMENT REMINDER NOTICE

The *2<sup>nd</sup> installment* for the 2002 billing period is **due June 20, 2002**. **OID will not be mailing a reminder** statement for this payment.

Accounts become delinquent if the *2<sup>nd</sup> installment* is not received at the District office by 4:30 p.m., or not postmarked on or before June 20, 2002.

### DITCHTENDER LIST

	<b>DIVISION 1</b>	<b>DIVISION 2</b>	<b>DIVISION 3</b>	<b>DIVISION 4</b>	<b>DIVISION 5</b>
PHONE #	988-3532	988-2882	988-2881	988-2883	988-2884
DAY	Mark Ashworth #59	Leon VanDiepen #36	Matt Wearin #61	Johnny Carrizales #33	Lori Hawkins #55
NIGHT	Matt Vella #68	Matt Vella #68	Matt Vella #68	Bill Johnson #90	Bill Johnson #90
DAY RELIEF	Randy Walker #28	Glen Collins #62	Glen Collins #62	Jeff Dove #63	Jeff Dove #63
NIGHT RELIEF	Steve Dove #51	Steve Dove #51	Steve Dove #51	Steve Dove #51	Steve Dove #51
	<b>DIVISION 6</b>	<b>DIVISION 7</b>	<b>DIVISION 8</b>	<b>DIVISION 9</b>	<b>DIVISION 10</b>
PHONE #	988-3065	988-3066	988-3067	988-1802	988-3068
DAY	Vince Vella #57	Chris Haverson #83	Marc Oberkamper #43	Lee Scully #87	Don Prichard #46
NIGHT	Ron Robinson #88	Ron Robinson #88	Michael Evans #103	Michael Evans #103	Michael Evans #103
DAY RELIEF	Randy Walker #28	Daniel Bond #97	Daniel Bond #97	Bob Becker #102	Bob Becker #102
NIGHT RELIEF	Jim Long #35	Jim Long #35	Jim Long #35	Jim Long #35	Jim Long #35
DAY ROVER-	Gary Green #39 988-3750	NIGHT ROVER- None at this Time			
AFTER HOURS/EMERGENCY	988-3750	PAGER 579-6967			
#12 Mike Evans, Watermaster	988-3070, Pager 578-8746				
#30 Tom Laidlaw, Assistant Watermaster	988-3071, Pager 569-3519				
#34 Mike Hanf, Assistant Watermaster	988-3069, Pager 236-2529				