

Adopted December 2, 2008

Surface Water Shortage Policy

December 2008

Introduction:

When the Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) was formed in 1909 its' specific purpose and charge was and still is as trustee of the surface water rights of the District's constituents. The control and distribution of that water is controlled by the reasonable and beneficial standards under the California Water Code. With respect to those Codes and to the senior water rights of OID, the District is committed to managing this right to the mutual benefit of all lands within the District's service boundaries first and foremost. There will be times however where the quantity of the water right available to the District is insufficient to meet the water demands of the crops grown. In those instances, a policy has been developed to address such shortages.

The following draft Surface Water Shortage Policy is to be used as a guide to the District and its Board during periods of water shortages within the OID service area. Water shortages can occur for a variety of reasons due both to single and multiple events that may include; drought, an early start to the water season, a lack of spring rains, unseasonably high evapotranspiration, contractual obligations, canal failures on either the North or South Main, etc. To prepare for such events the OID has developed the following Surface Water Shortage Policy to address those issues.

Guiding Principles:

The guiding principles presented below are intended to illustrate the basic assumptions that were used to develop the plan. The guiding principles are as follows:

1. The District's obligation under California Water Code is to manage and deliver surface water resources under its charge in a reasonable and beneficial manner.
2. All lands within the District boundaries have an equal right to the availability of surface water, irrespective of crop(s) grown.
3. The District's options for allocating water are limited due to a nominal number of measureable turnouts within the District. Equality, at least for now, can only be determined by the number of rotations in a year provided to each delivery point.
4. District policy is to make surface water available when soil moisture depletion levels reach 2.4 inches.
5. Once the surface water resources of the District, as outlined under the 1988 Stipulation Agreement, are exhausted the District will suspend all water deliveries to its constituents.
6. Upon suspension of water deliveries by the District, landowners may secure other in-district opportunities for water delivery, from landowners with groundwater resources, in order to protect crops.
7. The District will permit intra-district water transfers between and among landowners within the District's service area. The District shall provide administrative and operation services to facilitate these transactions. Such arrangements are limited to groundwater resources within the District's service area only.
8. The District will make available the groundwater resources owned by the District on an at-cost-basis and as approved by the Board of Directors. Landowners may sign up to use a District Deep Well once surface water deliveries have been suspended.

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Levels of Surface Water Shortages and OID's Response:

Under the 1988 Stipulation Agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation, OID can expect water shortages when the annual inflow into New Melones is less than 600,000 acre feet. The shortage levels and the subsequent OID actions to be taken for that shortage level are identified below:

1. Level One – The District allocation is between 299,000 acre feet and 270,000 acre feet. As soon as the shortage is known or discovered the District will take any or all of the following actions depending on the shortage:
 - a. Suspension of Out of District Agreements
 - b. Increase the use of District Deep Wells.
 - c. Eliminate all ten (10) day rotations.
 - d. Increase rotation intervals to meet 2.4 inch depletion policy (i.e. 16, 18 or 20 day rotations)

2. Level Two – The District allocation is between 269,000 acre feet and 240,000 acre feet. As soon as the shortage is known or discovered the District will take the following actions in the following order:
 - a. All of Level One elements
 - b. Implement a Rotation Allocation Program – described below
 - c. Irrigation water available for agricultural purposes only

3. Level Three – The District allocation is below 240,000 acre feet. As soon as the shortage is known or discovered the District will take the following actions in the following order:
 - a. All of Level One and Two elements
 - b. Implement a zero discharge policy and issue monetary fines to all violators – described below.

Rotation Allocation Program

The Program would consist of taking the year's net Surface Water Available and dividing it by the *acre-foot per rotation value* (that number shall be determined by the Board based on historical use). The resultant number would be the number of rotations offered to each water user. It would be incumbent upon the water users to determine when they wanted to use their rotations. Under this Program, rotation times would be fixed at pre-water shortage durations. *Example, if the District's net Surface Water Available was 225,000 acre feet and the historical diversion per rotations value was 15,000 acre-feet per rotation, the number of rotations permitted per delivery point would be 15.*

Zero Discharge Policy & Subsequent Fines

Under a Level Three water shortage it will be incumbent upon all lands receiving surface irrigation water to ensure that no water leaves their property. A water user notice will be mailed out after such declaration by the Board of Directors, informing each water user of the discharge restriction. Should a landowner be found in violation of this rule they will be issued a notice and fined accordingly. If the landowner is found to be in violation of the rule a second time they will be fined again and lose all rights to future irrigations for the remainder of the irrigation season.

Fines for such violations shall be set and approved by the Board of Directors annually.

Water Resources & Current Obligations:

Table 1 – Water Resource Inventory & Expenditures

	Normal	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
Stanislaus River Allotment	600,000 ac-ft	599K – 540K	539K – 480K	479 K – 420K
OID’s Allocation	300,000 ac-ft	299K – 270K	269K – 240K	239K – 210K
Stockton East Agreement	-15,000	-15,000	-15,000	-6,250
S.J. River Agreement	-26,000	-26,000	-26,000	-26,000
Knight’s Ferry	-1,960	-1,960	-1,960	-1,960
Previous October Usage	-12,500	-12,500	-12,500	-12,500
Surface Water Available	244,540 ac/ft	244K - 215K	214K - 185K	192K – 163K
Groundwater	4,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Reclaimed Water	12,500	6,250	1,000	0
River Water	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Precipitation	14,600	10,000	7,300	0
Sub-Total	276,000 ac-ft	276K – 250K	238K – 209K	208K – 179K
Delivery Efficiency (+/-85%)	-42,000	-42,000	-36,000	-31,000
TOTAL (Delivery Available to Turnout)	234,000 ac-ft	234K – 210K	202K – 176K	177K – 148K
Shortfall from Normal		24K	58K	86K