

This month's GM Report will be a compilation of important news snippets that have occurred over the last couple of months.

The week of December 5-9 in Washington D.C. was a very busy time as the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) was introduced to the House of Representatives for a vote. Being there and working the "Hill" with SSJID was, to say the least, memorable. The eventual signage of the Bill on December 16<sup>th</sup> by President Obama was a significant step forward for both the nation, California agriculture and OID and SSJID. This Bill's passage may seem inconsequential to most but the language in the Bill contained a decade's worth of work by OID and SSJID in getting some much needed changes that can benefit our region's water future.

A portion of that legislation directs actions by the federal government to improve fisheries on the Stanislaus River through a predator suppression program. The details of the program will be worked out over the coming months. There is other language that allows the districts to work with our federal partners, the Bureau of Reclamation, in discussing opening the door to storage opportunities in New Melones Dam.

Many thanks to our Congressman Jeff Denham and his Washington staff and their diligence over the last 10 years in shepherding this legislation to its eventual passage.

Collectively we won a small victory of sorts in battling the State Water Resource Control Board's (Board) adoption of a revised Water Quality Control Plan for the Bay-Delta, more commonly known as the "40% Unimpaired Flow" Standard. The victory was an extension of the comment period until March 17<sup>th</sup>.

This short delay will be short lived however as the Board seems bent on adopting "more flow" as their only means of improving river and delta fisheries. As OID develops its comments in response to the State's unscientifically based program we are more fully identifying the pervasive impacts our community (Oakdale) will experience if this criteria is adopted. A brief summary of those impacts follows;

- Currently, OID's normal water allocation in most years is 300,000 acre feet. Under the State's Plan that would be reduced to 240,000 acre feet annually. In addition, in 1 out of every 10 years OID's water supply would be just 100,000 acre feet.
- A loss of 60,000 acre feet in average water-year's would mean OID's ability to sell surplus water would be lost and the \$5 million these sales generate annually would also be lost
- That revenue loss would necessitate that cost burden being passed onto OID's ag constituents. A \$5 million assessment spread over our 69,000 acre district would amount to a \$72 per acre increase to the current fixed rate charge of \$27 per acre. That cost could potentially bring your fixed rate acreage charge to almost \$100 per acre. Add your water cost to that number for your total water impact. That increase would just about eliminate pasture as an economically viable crop in our area.
- The water impact is not your total impact. That doesn't include the devaluation of OID's hydro-electric assets. Under the State's flow mandate OID would be running water down through its hydro-electric plants in the winter and spring when prices are lower. OID's hydro-plants were designed to run mostly in the summer when prices are higher. That lost value of energy needs may cost OID and its constituents.

We all need to all be vigilant in our efforts to keep up the pressure to make sure the State's water grab is never implemented in its current form. More water doesn't make more fish!

There is this fiction that is being permeated throughout our area that somehow OID selling its surplus water is a bad thing. If you were to look at the facts you'd see that of the 9 irrigation districts in our immediate area, 5 of them sell surplus water each year to generate revenue (SSJID, MeID, WSID, PID, OID), 2 attempt to buy water (DPWD and EWD) when available and two mega-utilities (TID, MID) choose to do neither.

OID is blessed with two substantial renewable resources, water and hydroelectric power. Both these developed resources were investments made by our forefathers for the sole purpose of assisting financially in providing cheap low cost water to agriculture. Maximizing these annual sales reap a "return on investment" that OID puts to work for you. It's something you should be proud of. In the last 15 years OID has improved the efficiency of both its water and power systems to make even more resources available to further increase that benefit to our customers. Don't believe the fiction that this is somehow now a bad thing. It's a good thing; unless of course you don't like cheap affordable water that benefits ag and keeps money in your pocket.

Fight the State's Water Grab. Visit [www.SavetheStan.org](http://www.SavetheStan.org) or [www.WorthYourFight.org](http://www.WorthYourFight.org) to see how.

**Water Report as of March 1, 2017**

Facility	Max Storage (af)	Current Storage (af)	% Capacity	Inflow (cfs)	Storage Change Since 10/1 (af)
New Melones - Federal	2,419,523	1,578,546	65%	5,827	1,050,117
Donnells	64,325	56,555	88%	623	TOC*
Beardsley	97,802	78,608	80%	1,247	TOC*
Tulloch	66,968	56,960	85%	365	TOC*

New Melones Inflow Oct 1 – Mar 1 - 2017 = 1,147,000 af

OID Water Allocation for upcoming 2016/17 Water Year = 600,000 af – We made it!

TOC\* = Top of Conservation Pool. This elevation is set for the winter at Donnells, Beardsley and Tulloch so inflow at this point will not be going to storage but released down the river. These facilities are so small they fill rapidly in the spring time.



Oakdale Irrigation District  
1205 East F Street  
Oakdale, CA 95361  
(209) 847-0341  
[www.oakdaleirrigation.com](http://www.oakdaleirrigation.com)