

**OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT**  
**General Manager's Monthly Report**

**July 2017**

Water availability is far from being an issue this year for OID. Record snowpack and record runoff will bring New Melones to just under 2.2 million acre-feet (MAF) of its 2.4 MAF capacity. Accumulated Runoff-Year to Date into New Melones as of June 18<sup>th</sup> was 2.458 MAF. The record previous to this was in 1983 at 2.122 MAF. Basin precipitation recorded at New Melones was 49.97 inches compared to 1983 of 45.33 inches and compared to 27.04 inches on average.

There will be lots of advisories from experts about river safety and we urge you to follow their advice. If you need to get wet to avoid the heat this summer we encourage you to visit Tulloch, Woodward, Modesto or Turlock Lakes or the larger facilities at New Melones or New Don Pedro, at least until river flows get back to normal. Be smart and stay safe!

One would think with all this rain and bountiful winter that our area's groundwater levels would have seen some significant recovery. They haven't and there's a good reason for that.

To the east of Oakdale there are new demands being placed on our region's groundwater aquifers due to the uncontrolled and unmanaged conversion of rangeland into farmland. Between 2005 and 2015 over 26,000 rangeland acres have converted to trees. Add this to the roughly 7,000 acres that existed prior to 2005 and to the 2,000 acres planted since 2015 and you see the problem.

We now have 35,000 acres of a blooming eastern agriculture (half the size of OID) extracting over 100,000 acre feet annually of groundwater. This is groundwater that would have flowed into OID's service area to recharge our aquifer but instead is being intercepted and used to grow their trees. As a result, the normal recharge pattern for groundwater movement into our area is being impacted by others.

Oakdale is not an exception to this land boom. Cheap foothill land prices; high commodity prices on nuts due to a changing world dynamic; and relatively cheap costs to pump from the underground water supplies without controls or limitations; are all reasons that provided a "make money" opportunity for farmers. While their profits may be up, our problems are just beginning.

Since 1940, the overall drop in water tables within OID has been consistent at about 0.75 feet per year. From 2008–2015 that drop increased to about 1.0 foot per year, likely drought related. OID wells, in the zone of development of this eastern Ag boom have fallen 40 feet in that same period. That's significant and we fully expect that drop to increase as young orchards mature and farmers continue to pump to meet that growing demand.

So what's the fix? Our region has formed a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) that will begin looking at and developing answers to achieve long-term groundwater sustainability. This is a legislative Act adopted by the State in 2014.

While many groundwater pumpers in the eastern county are looking to acquire OID surface water to solve their problem that may not be possible unless some innovative water management and recharge creativity can be implemented. Going forward, surface water in OID will serve three purposes; First: to fully meet the water demands of OID constituents each and every year; Second: to increase recharge in our own area to attain groundwater sustainability as now required by state law; Third: the loss of water to the State Water Board as they take 40% of the Stanislaus River flow from our area. Check out websites below. After securing these three purposes, then other demands to our east can be addressed.

The good news, agriculture will continue to thrive in OID. Your Board of Directors saw these challenges coming years ago and planned out a future to protect this area's heritage. Staying the course on this planning program, conservatively managing our water resources and exercising fiscal responsibility in rebuilding and modernizing our water system will keep our water rights strong and working for your benefit, while keeping rates affordable.

**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 June 19, 2017**

Facility	Max Storage (af)	Current Storage (af)	% Capacity	Inflow (cfs)	Storage Change Since 10/1 (af)
New Melones - Federal	2,419,523	2,131,000	88%	7,048	+1,602,571
Donnells	64,325	58,617	91%	4,906	+29,387
Beardsley	97,802	81,884	84%	4,292	+23,474
Tulloch	66,968	65,572	98%	4,356	+11

New Melones Inflow since Oct 1 = 2,458,000 af  
 OID 2016/17 Water Allocation = 300,000 af  
 OID Water Used Oct 1, 2016 to June 1, 2017 = 52,857 af  
 Water Sales this year Out-of-Area = 0 af  
 Water Sales made available for local use = Unlimited af  
 Local Water Sales to date = 400 af  
 OID water (est.) to be lost to Federal Government on September 30 = 76,900 af



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