

OID NEWS BLAST

by Steve Knell, General Manager

DID YOU KNOW?

The following tidbits were found in the Board Minutes from October 6, 1914; The standard work day at OID in 1914 was 9 hours. The wage was \$0.25/hour for construction and maintenance workers. A horse skinner (whatever that is) was paid \$0.15/hour extra for caring for the OID's horse teams used in OID's Construction and Maintenance Divisions. Equipment such as scrapers, light wagons and heavy wagons were available to constituents at rates ranging from \$0.20 to \$0.30/day. Horses were rented out for \$0.85/day with an additional \$0.35/day charge if feed was not provided. If OID furnished a meal at work, workers paid \$0.30/meal for that benefit.

Full time ditchtenders were paid \$70/month if they did not live in OID housing. If OID housing was provided the rental charge was \$5/month for a furnished house. Stipends were provide at \$10/month to each ditch-tender who used their own transportation on the job, which was likely a horse at the time. Temporary ditchtenders were paid \$2.50 per 12-hour shift.



\$1,056,184,000 (2017 Value)

STATUS OF THE STATE'S WATER GRAB

The State Water Board adopted Phase I of their 40% unimpaired flow standard, February through June, at their December 12, 2018 Board Meeting. Board member Dee Dee D'Adamo (Turlock) was the only dissenting vote. Thirty days later, on January 11, 2019, the San Joaquin Tributaries Authority filed their writ of mandamus and declaratory relief action in Tuolumne County against the State's plan. In short, we're going to court for a very long time.

The SJTA suit includes SSJID, TID, City and County of San Francisco and OID. For strategy reasons, MID, members of the SJTA, wanted to file their suit in Sacramento County. We're all cautious that Voluntary Settlement Agreements amongst the parties can be achieved. Please continue to watch www.SavetheStan.org for updates.

A wrench in the mixer to the State's grab came from the Federal Department of Justice which filed both a State and Federal complaint (suit) against the State's Water Board. Their suit alleged shortcomings in the State's environmental analysis and for their attempt at taking 700,000 acre feet of New Melones storage for their own uses.

Apparently, someone at the State level didn't know that States can't take federal property that was built with federal dollars to meet federal purposes. I find it odd to have the federal government stepping in to save us from our own State government. We applaud this federal intervention into this fault laden plan of the State.



\$254,695,000 (2017 Value)

SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT (SGMA)

If you are an OID water user north of the Stanislaus River you are in the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) operating as the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority. This GSA will be releasing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) this summer. The GSP will be detailing the actions to be taken over the next 20 years to get its groundwater basin to a level of long-term sustainability.

If you are an OID water user south of the Stanislaus River and north of the Tuolumne River you are in the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association. You won't be seeing a planning document for another year. This basin is not critically over-drafted and therefore has some more time under the law.

However, both basins are required by State law (SGMA) to get to a sustainable groundwater condition within 20 years of adoption of their GSP documents. Both Basins will be doing some heavy lifting to meet the sustainability requirement and it won't be without a cost to all of us. For those that pump groundwater it will be more



\$163,644,000 (2017 Value)

GROUNDWATER CONDITIONS IN OID

On January 15th of this year the OID Board heard a presentation by staff on the changing groundwater levels beneath our District. From 2005 to 2012 the water table had fallen from 73 feet below the ground's surface to 78 feet. A modest downward trend of 0.6 feet per year. This rate of decline has pretty much been the historical downward trend dating back to the late 1940's when OID began tracking groundwater levels in its 26 deep well pumps. The unsettling part is that from 2012 to 2018 water levels in those same wells had fallen from 78 feet to 93 feet, representing a downward trend of 2.3 feet per year. That's a 400% increase over the historical trend. OID's most eastern wells are showing declines of 6.3 feet per year. Why?

It's estimated that 40,000 acres of agricultural land is now developed east of Oakdale and lying between the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers. Except for the 8,000 acres OID annexed in 2012, the remaining 32,000 acres is pumping groundwater for irrigation. That pumping, which hadn't existed before, is estimated to exceed 100,000 acre feet. By contrast, OID pumps less than 3,000 acre feet from all of its 26 groundwater wells within its entire 82,000 acre service area.

People are asking, can OID help? To some extent, yes. OID has a policy to make surplus water available to local ag before doing any out-of-area water sales. While OID makes that offering every March, less than 4,000 acre feet is ever sold. Understandably for those ag lands, it's a business decision. Why buy OID water at \$60-\$80 per acre foot when they can pump groundwater for \$40 per acre foot? Eventually, those "business decisions" will be creating long-term impacts that the GSA's will have to address. We are seeing GSA's from Fresno to Bakersfield dealing with those choices now. Our area won't be immune.

To follow the developments of GSP's in Stanislaus or San Joaquin Counties type the following into your search browser:

<https://www.oakdaleirrigation.com/sustainable-groundwater-management-act-sgma-implementation>



\$663,650,000 (2017 Value)

WATER SEASON NEWS

How good can good get?! As of April 4th, New Melones Reservoir stands at 1.99 million acre feet. It only holds 2.42 million. So far, inflow into the dam since October 1, 2018 has totaled 649,000 acre feet. It's estimated that runoff from April 1 to July 1 will be an additional 1.01 million acre feet. That's how much snow is in the Sierras!

Available storage left in New Melones is only 430,000 acre feet. Somehow, New Melones will need to be getting rid of 530,000 acre feet between now and July 1st. That's a lot of river flows between now and then which will mean high flows and dangerous water. Also, that's not good news to those who recreate on the river and for our local rafting companies.

Be advised, the river water will be cold and swift and will not be a place to visit during the early part of the summer months. Best to use Woodward, Tulloch or Modesto Reservoirs for recreation.



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