

Tulare Irrigation District  
6826 Avenue 240  
Tulare, California 93274

LOOK INSIDE...

Water Deliveries Resume  
School Water Educator Retires  
Keeping It Down on the Farm  
Kaweah Bottleneck Averted  
Groundwater Sustainability  
Employee News

Visit us at...  
www.tulareid.org



Founded in 1889, Tulare ID was one of the first irrigation districts in California. Its purpose is to serve the water supply needs of the greater Tulare area, a rich and agriculturally diverse region within the Southern San Joaquin Valley. The water provided comes locally from the Kaweah River and is also imported from the Federal Central Valley Project.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| June      | 14 - TID Board of Directors Meeting\<br>20 - 2nd Tax Assessment Delinquent (5% Penalty)   |
| July      | 4 - Independence Day (Office Closed)<br>12 - TID Board of Directors Meeting   |
| August    | 9 - TID Board of Directors Meeting<br>9 - Date of Board of Equalization Meeting Set<br>2, 9 and 16 - Delinquent Publication Notice<br>25 - Record Certificate of Sale - Tax Sales |
| September | 1 - Labor Day (Office Closed)<br>13 - TID Board of Directors Meeting<br>13 - Board of Equalization Meeting re Assessments<br>23 - Board of Equalization Closed                    |



# TID TIDINGS

Newsletter of the Tulare Irrigation District

Board of Directors


David Bixler  
President

Richard Borges  
Vice President

Michael Thomas

Scott Rogers

Dave Martin



J. Paul Hendrix  
General Manager

The Board of Directors holds regular public meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 9:00 am at the District office in Tulare

1st /2nd Qtr. 2016

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School Water Educator Retires

Since 2009, TID has had an ally in educating 5<sup>th</sup> grade students locally on the importance of our water supplies, both what TID provides in the canals as well as the groundwater beneath us. Mike Milanese, Science Curriculum Specialist with the Tulare City School District, has been a part of this water education program since the start. Mike is now retiring as this school year comes to a close, having devoted over thirty years to being an educator. Our District Engineer, Aaron Fukuda, says that “Mike was instrumental in making the water conservation goals of the District align with the curriculum standards required for students. Mike's impact on students reach far into the Tulare community as he has challenged students to understand where water comes from, how we use it and how we can all save water to ensure a vibrant future.”

Aaron and Mike have consistently made the rounds each school year to Maple, Garden, Wilson, Heritage, Cypress, Lincoln and Kohn elementary schools, putting on display our water education apparatus, along with free licorice candy handouts to boot! Mike’s willingness to sponsor the water program on behalf of the school district has been much appreciated and we wish him well as he heads off into his retirement years.

WATER DELIVERIES RESUME

Even though the much-anticipated El Niño turned into more of an El Nada, the winter was sufficient enough to yield water for TID and other Valley districts who’ve been high and dry the last several years. Our Kaweah River supply may be upwards of 50,000 AF for the year and, for the first time since 2013, the Friant supply remains on the east side, safe from a call by USBR to be sent downstream to irrigate the lower San Joaquin River lands near Los Banos.

Thus far, the USBR has allocated a 65% Class 1 supply, 7% Class 2 supply and additional water stemming from what’s called “Unreleased Restoration Flows.” The URF water would have otherwise been provided to Friant districts as additional Class 1 and 2 water, but is now under the management of the Restoration Program. For the foreseeable future, URF water will be made available in the Friant-Kern Canal until such time as further implementation of the Restoration Program increases the carrying capacity of the lower San Joaquin River. All in all, we anticipate at least 42,000 AF of Friant supply, including extra water acquired from Lindsay-Strathmore ID, our long-term exchange partner.

Water became available in March, both from flood space evacuation releases from Terminus Dam and from early allocations from Friant. What would in the past have been largely a groundwater recharge run, crop demands were high and most of this early supply was sold at turnouts for irrigation purposes. This year’s summer irrigation run will be short, maybe about five weeks long. Snowmelt runoff projections are running about 70% of average, thus resulting in limited summer water supplies amassing in the southern Sierra reservoirs. Because of the short run, we also anticipate late-season supplies being allocated by USBR after it’s over. While these late allocations will be too small to resume summer deliveries, they will be available for diversion to the District next winter, when Kaweah River flows likely occur to once again vacate needed flood space in the reservoir.



KEEPING IT DOWN ON THE FARM

Had the wet winter materialized, TID stood ready to activate an on-farm recharge project and lease agreements had been prepared to provide some 6,800 acres with water at no cost. This type of program is gaining traction in other parts of the Valley as well, and considerable research at the university level and elsewhere is being done to identify ideal locations and soils for maximum benefit. Data is being developed too for permanent crops and their ability to withstand over-irrigation for groundwater recharge benefits.

District Engineer Aaron Fukuda worked with growers early last winter, conducted two workshops, and crafted a lease agreement. With approval by the Board of Directors, a program was in place should we have seen surplus flows available for dedication to on-farm recharge. While not activated, the program stands ready for next winter should it be stormy. A total of 25 growers indicated participatory interest, and about 1,160 acres of the total were permanent plantings. Per the lease agreement, a minimum of 20 acres was required to participate, and landowners would commit to a maximum delivery rate at their headgate for the duration of the February 1<sup>st</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup> lease period. Also, District reserved the right to determine a priority of deliveries based on property location and soil types.

Looking for a new use for your south forty? Come on in and talk to Aaron.

KAWEAH BOTTLENECK AVERTED

Thanks to the efficient repair efforts of the USCE and engagement of our Kaweah & St Johns Watermaster team, a potential summer run disaster has been avoided.

The USCE outlet gates, feeding the 13-ft diameter tunnel at the bottom of Lake Kaweah draining into the river, were rendered inoperable when the control tower used to operate the gates flooded with water in late April. Without them, irrigation demands would have to be met solely from the limited flow capacity of KRPA’s power plant facilities. Peak demands could have been shorted by about 800 acre-feet per day, causing some farmers to turn to groundwater or wait in line for orders to be met. The Kaweah & St Johns River Units began meeting in earnest with Kaweah Delta WCD and the Watermaster to determine a means to doll out capacity when peak demands usurp the power plant’s flow limits. Fortunately the repairs were completed by May 25<sup>th</sup>, avoiding the allocation issue for this summer. However, the Units have agreed to continue the knotty discussions of flow prorates in the event a problem should ever occur again like the one we just skirted by.



Control Tower at Lake Kaweah



Beth Holmes

**EMPLOYEE NEWS:** Now with thirty years of employment with TID, Beth Holmes started working with us as a Clerk on May 29, 1986. Beth now holds the board appointed position of Assessor-Collector and Senior Administrator. Prior to working for the District Beth worked with her parents Jim & Katie M<sup>c</sup>Allister at a family-owned business Bob Myers Clothiers (1974-1984) and then moved to Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in 1985. Beth raised two successful adult children while working for the District, Brandon Holmes and Melissa Goto. Beth takes pride in having worked with three General Managers: David L. Zack, Gerald C. Hill, Jr. and J. Paul Hendrix. Beth has always enjoyed working with the local farmers and landowners within the District.

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY

Talks continue amongst public water purveyors, farmers and other stakeholders on working together to comply with the state’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, or SGMA as it’s being called. Just who will take on compliance activities and set up the rules of the road must be decided by next summer and, by 2020, plans to lay all this out must be adopted. Simply put, plans must lay out a path forward to phase out groundwater overdraft by 2040.

For our part, and as has been reported in prior issues of TID Tidings, we have partnered with the cities of Tulare and Visalia to comply with SGMA and do our collective part to achieve groundwater balance for our area. We three are now what’s known as the Mid-Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and TID’s board president David Bixler and board member Dave Martin serve on the Mid-Kaweah GSA’s governing board. Two members each from the city councils make up the balance of the new board. Legal counsel (Ken Richardson of Peltzer & Richardson LC) has been retained to draft governance documents and handle any legal issues that may arise. We’ve also hired a consulting engineering firm with groundwater expertise (GEI Consultants) to assist us in undertaking the daunting task of identifying groundwater conditions and trends in our area and regionally, which efforts will ultimately lead to a plan for compliance with SGMA. GEI is doing similar work in Kern County, an area larger and far more complex in terms of the many agencies and stakeholders who must work together to solve significant overdraft-related problems. Much of the yeoman’s work is being carried out by existing staffs of TID and the two cities, and the GSA’s first-year budget of \$450,000 is being supported by contributions from existing funds on hand from each member.

MID-KAWEAH GSA

BOARD MEMBERS:

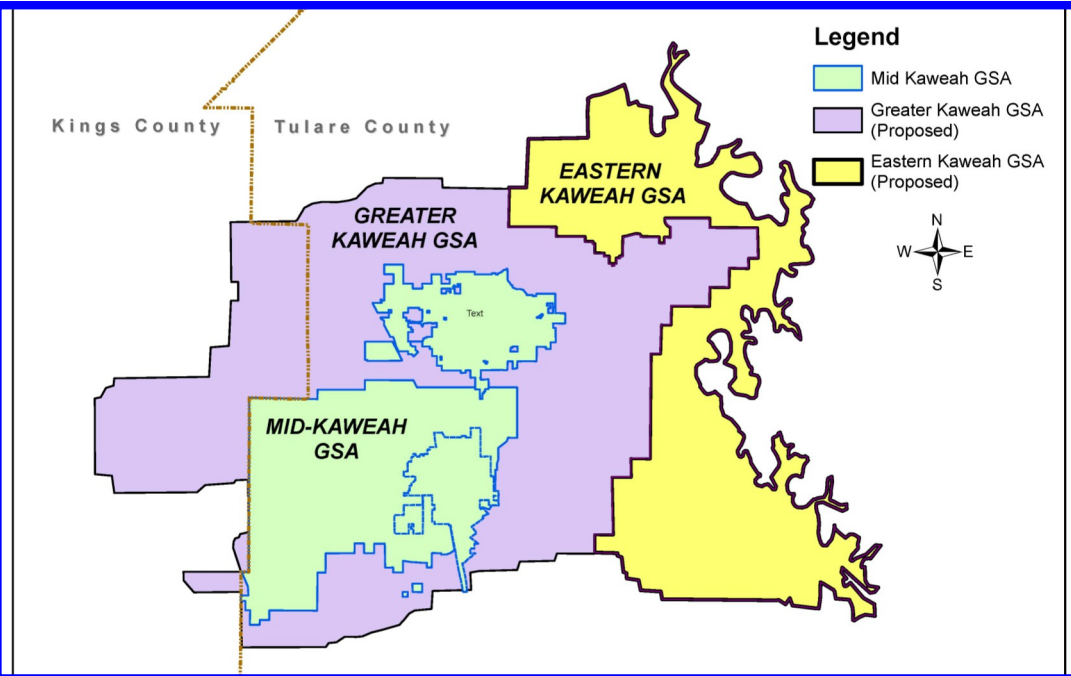
- Carlton Jones (Tulare )
- Craig Vejvoda (Tulare)
- Greg Collins (Visalia)
- Steve Nelson (Visalia)
- David Bixler (TID)
- Dave Martin (TID)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

- Mike Boyes
- Eric Charles
- Richard Garcia
- Edward Henry
- Sopac Mulholland
- Jim Nichols
- Jessi Snyder
- Brett Taylor
- Blake Wilbur

Groundwater Sustainability Plans aren’t going to come about unless and until we obtain stakeholder support. Mid-Kaweah has a nine-member Advisory Committee, and District farmers Blake Wilbur and James Nichols are members. The Advisory Committee will be involved in problem assessment and the very important task of shaping the sustainability plan that all groundwater pumpers and stakeholders must abide by. Like the GSA board meetings, all Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Our new website will be up and running soon, and here you’ll be able to find information regarding meetings and activities.

Within the Kaweah Sub-Basin, it’s looking like three GSAs will ultimately emerge to cover the entire 700 square-mile area – ours (Mid-Kaweah), plus an “Eastern Kaweah GSA” and “Greater Kaweah GSA” as shown on the map. While the respective boundaries are not yet final, each of these other two GSAs may have a dozen members or more, and governance issues are being worked out amongst these many entities. Our Mid-Kaweah group awaits the culmination of this process, as their final formation will enable us to more formally reach out and foster a coordination effort for the whole sub-basin.



MAP OF THREE POTENTIAL GSAs IN KAWEAH SUB-BASIN