

# LOWER TULE LEGEND

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Division 1

Gary Fernandes

Division 4

The Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 9:00 a.m. at the District office in Woodville. The public is invited to attend.

## WHAT IS THE LEGEND?

When searching for a name for the District's newsletter, a variety of suggestions were discussed. At the end of the day we decided on the *Lower Tule Legend*. In addition to the catchy alliteration, Legend offers a variety of connotations, all of which can be applied to our District. Allow me to explain.

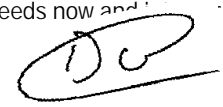
According to Webster's Dictionary, legend can be defined in at least three different ways. Webster's first defines legend as "a story handed down for generations among a people and popularly believed to have a historical basis, although not always verifiable." If you have ever been to a District Board meeting or spent any time in one of the local coffee shops you will understand how well that definition fits our District. Some of the most interesting and colorful conversations I have are those where tales of our District's farming families and their histories are recounted. The year 2000 marks the 50th anniversary of the District so one can truly say that we have been founded and molded by generations of families and farms. The different generations saw changing times and events, but in one way or another are all responsible for the success of the Lower Tule River Irrigation District. The founding fathers of the District will recount grower meetings where the merits of an irrigation district were literally cussed and discussed. Once the District was formed the work began to construct a water system that remains today. Throughout the years the different generations fought to protect their water supply all the while enhancing the District and a way of life. These events carry with them stories, handed down for generations, all of which have a historical basis.

Webster's further goes on to define legend as "a notable person or entity whose deeds or exploits are much talked about." The District's Board room best illustrates the significance here as Webster's defines it. On the wall are the faces and exploits of those most instrumental to the formation and advancement of the Lower Tule River Irrigation District. I find it fascinating to observe those whose family names still dot

the District's ownership map. The faces of those who have served include Fathers and Sons, Grandfathers and Grandsons all of which prove that the commitment to a reliable water supply is not something that comes and goes. Chances are most of you have a relative that has served on the Board of Directors at one time or another.

The notion of legendary deeds and exploits has significance for the District in other arenas as well. As one of the largest irrigation districts in the State of California, Lower Tule's influence and responsibilities extend far beyond our District boundaries. Lower Tule has always played an active role in local, state and national water issues and it is recognized accordingly. Lower Tule has a long history of working with its neighbors in good times and bad and is known for its progressive nature in all facets of our business.

Finally, Webster's defines legend as "a title, brief description, or key accompanying an illustration." That is precisely what we intend the *Legend* to be. We hope to publish this newsletter on a quarterly basis to help inform our constituents of the District's activities. We plan to keep the reading light, brief and informative. You all receive regular updates on broad water issues from the local press and/or the *Friant Waterline* and as such the *Legend* will focus more on the local impacts of the larger issues. In addition, we hope to keep you apprised of District projects and help explain District policies and procedures. We will also feature a "meet the staff" section that we hope will help you get to better know those District employees that you work with. In short, we intend the *Legend* to be a brief description and illustration of the District's activities. We hope the *Legend* will help us foster the relationships necessary to meet your water needs now and in the future.



Dan Vink

## WATER SUPPLY CONTRACTS

### DISTRICT MEET WITH THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION TO BEGIN RENEWAL PROCESS

Follow the contract renewal process at the Bureau of Reclamation Contract Renewal Web site:

<http://www.mp.usbr.gov/cvpia/3404c/index.html>

On January 13 District officials met with 112 Central Valley Project (CVP) contractors and the Bureau of Reclamation to continue the process of renewing the District's long-term water supply contracts. As required by the Central Valley Project Improvement Act of 1992, (CVPIA) the CVP contracts were scheduled for renewal following the completion of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). After six years and millions of taxpayer dollars, the Federal Government finally released the PEIS, which when completed, totaled over 7,500 pages. In an effort to have the Clinton administration leave its mark

on California water, the Bureau hopes to have the contracts negotiated by the fall of 2000. With the current contracts expiring around that same time, the contractors have little choice but to try and comply with the Bureau's schedule.

The negotiation process promises to be difficult and time consuming. Among the issues raised by the Bureau that are new to the long-term contracts include:

- **Right to Renew:** The government is adamant that CVPIA dictates the long-term contracts be for a maximum period of 25

years with no automatic right for renewal after that time.

- **Tiered Pricing:** CVPIA mandates that the new contracts contain pricing language that puts the last 20% of the District's water supply at rates up to what is called "full cost." Full cost rates are generally more than 25% higher than the normal "contract rate" To add insult to injury, the Bureau is advocating a contract that would lower the base amount of the contract supply to a level that would trigger the
- (Continued on page 4)*

## FRIANT-KERN CANAL DEWATERING

LOWER TULE ASSISTS IN MAJOR CONSTRUCTION WORK

Consistent with our long history of cooperating with neighboring water interests, the District has again participated in the construction and repair activities associated with the dewatering



of the Friant Kern Canal. Under the direction of the Friant Water Users Authority, the main water artery for the southern Central Valley was dewatered

during early December with final work scheduled to be completed by the end of January. At the conclusion of the project, the Authority will have replaced over one-hundred and forty 12 by 15 foot concrete panels in the canal along with significant turnout repair and gate painting. The majority of the canal was drained from the head works at Millerton Lake to the termination point in Bakersfield. Friant Business Manager Ron Jacobsma said "Cooperative weather and a well organized crew were the key to completing the project ahead of schedule." Lower Tule was

instrumental in getting the work done in a timely manner. Lower Tule and its staff are to be commended for their professional work and excellent equipment" said Jacobsma. Lower Tule contracted with Friant Water Users for use of District equipment and operators. Friant operations policy schedules the canal for dewatering every three years for maintenance and construction.

## SUCCESS RESERVOIR ENLARGEMENT

### DESIGN PHASE CONTINUES

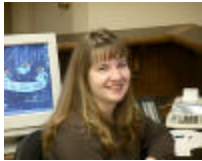
Through the Tule River Association, Lower Tule continues to participate in the enlargement of the Success Reservoir. The District is partnering with local irrigation districts, the Counties of Tulare and Kings and the City of Porterville to fund the local cost share of the enlargement project. The project continues to weave its way through federal and state channels in order to secure design and construction appropriations. Actual construction remains several years away. Once completed, the enlargement, (raising the spillway 10 feet) will add 25,000 acre-feet of wet year storage to the existing 82,300 acre-feet of Success Reservoir storage. Look for more enlargement information in future editions.



CHECK OUT THE FRIANT WATER USERS AUTHORITY WEB SITE:  
[WWW.FWUA.ORG](http://WWW.FWUA.ORG)

## MEET THE LOWER TULE STAFF

In an effort to have our staff be more familiar to our constituents, we will offer this regular feature in the *Legend*.



**Nancy Soto.** Nancy has been with the District since 1998. When you call the District office chances are it will be Nancy's friendly voice that greets you. Nancy works as the District's main secretary and receptionist. She serves in a support role for both the Board of Directors and the General Manager as well as ensuring that the office runs smoothly. Nancy and her husband Mike live in Woodville and have three children.

**Mike Clark.** Mike has been with the District since 1980 and is one of the District's most senior Heavy Equipment Operators. During the winter months you are most likely to see Mike operating one of the District's two motor graders, shaping and sloping the District's canals in

preparation for the upcoming water season. When not operating the grader, Mike works in the maintenance department operating a variety of the District's equipment. In addition to working for the District, Mike serves on the Board of Directors for the Poplar Utility District. Mike and his wife Carla live in the town of Poplar.



**Pat Burton.** After 30 years with the District, Construction and Maintenance Superintendent Pat Burton is one of the District's most visible and well known employees. In addition to overseeing all construction activity, Pat is responsible for the Districts outside maintenance personnel and equipment. All custom work for District constituents and other Irrigation Districts is coordinated through Pat. Pat and his wife Doris live in Woodville.



*From March 1996 through September 1999 over 1.1 million acre-feet of water was brought into the District*

## CANAL PROJECT COMPLETED CONSTRUCTION INCLUDES NEW SINKING BASIN

Under the Direction of District staff, a new canal has been completed at the west end of the District's service territory. The **Los Feliz Canal** is an extension of the District's #2 Lateral. The #2 Lateral serves an area south of Avenue 144 from Poplar to Road 72. The new extension is designed to serve a seven section area west of Road 80. Long term plans call for tie-in of the Los Feliz Canal to the District's #1 Lateral on Avenue 128.

Work on the Los Feliz project began in September of 1998 with the completion coming in the late spring of 1999. Completing the project involved the construction of 18 single bay concrete check structures, 9 road crossings and the excavation of 4.5 miles of new canal. All of the structure and canal work was completed by District staff and equipment. As part of the construction agreements the District was given title to 40 acres at the termination point of the new canal. The 40 acre site now serves as the terminal spill facility for the #2 Lateral and the new extension as well as a groundwater recharge site for the west half of the District. The 40 acre recharge site was designed in conjunction with Audubon Society specifications in or-

der to accommodate the waterfowl that use the Central Valley as a flyway for winter migration.



Los Feliz Canal

Financing for the Los Feliz project was done in conjunction with the landowners that the new canal will serve.

### NEW BASIN UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The District has completed an 80 acre land exchange and has begun work on the construction of a new 80 acre recharge site south of Woodville. Look for more information in the next edition of the *Legend*.

*Western irrigated agriculture contributes more than \$60 billion annually to the United States economy*

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Irrigation District

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*Working together to meet  
your water needs now and  
into our future*

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*Did you know?*

*About 0.6 percent of  
the world's total water  
supply is stored as  
groundwater.*

Address

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**REMINDER: The District cannot accept dairy wastewater at any point in our system. We realize that the winter months often mean extra waste water and empty canals seem to be a good place for disposal. However, state regulation prohibits the dumping of waste water in public water ways. If you know of waste water being dumped into the District's system please call the office.**

*(Continued from page 2)*

tiered pricing provisions much sooner. Under the proposed scenario the 20% would be delivered in most every year. The effect of the government's position could raise the District's annual water costs by as much as \$2.5 million dollars.

- Groundwater: The Bureau has indicated that they want to have more control over CVP water that is recharged in the underground.

Contract renewal discussions will be occurring on a weekly basis. The CVP wide sessions involve all 112 CVP contractors. On the 26th of January the Friant contractors will meet with the Bureau at a divisional level to discuss and negotiate issues that are specific to the Friant project.

Future editions of the *Legend* will include updates and reports on the contract renewal process.

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## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

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- January 26th — Divisional Contract Renewals  
Visalia Convention Center
- February 8th — Lower Tule Board Meeting
- February 9th - 11th — Farm Show
- February 21st — President's Day (Office Closed)
- March 29 - Lower Tule Public Meeting  
Ag Tac Center
- June 20th — 2nd installment of the 2000 assessment due