

LOWER TULE LEGEND

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- Tony Simonich
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.

PUBLIC MEETING—MARCH 2000

On March 26th the District held a public meeting at the Ag-Tac Center in Tulare. The purpose of the meeting was to give the District landowners and water users an update on a variety of activities and projects. Highlights from the meeting included:

Financial Matters: the current year's budget was reviewed (figure 1) along with a comparison that demonstrated the dramatic increase and cost shift in budgeted amounts over the

the same and the budget is adjusted accordingly. The District's budget for the 2000 fiscal year (Jan—Dec) was adopted at the Board meeting in September of 1999, the same time the Board of Equalization meets to review the assessed valuations and set the 2000 assessment rate.

Water Supply Update: time was spent reviewing the 2000 water supply (see Page 2) as well as trends in surface delivery and groundwater storage within the District. District average depth to groundwater in February 2000 was 77.7 feet. The Class 1 water cost per acre-foot to the District for 2000 is \$32.73 with the Class 2 rate being \$24.17. Both rates include \$14.12 that goes toward the Environmental Restoration Fund as mandated by CVPIA. In addition to the contract water rates, the District pays a flat rate wheeling charge to the Friant Water Users Authority for the delivery of Class 1 and 2 water through the Friant-Kern Canal. The wheeling charge for 2000 totals more than \$1,000,000.

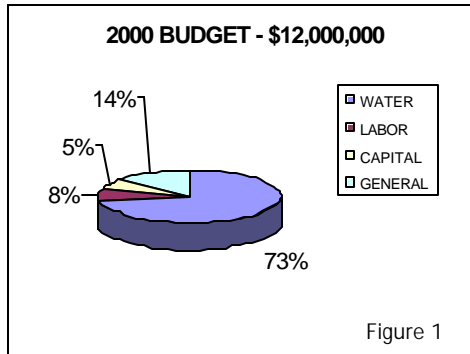


Figure 1

past 15 years (figure 2). As is evident by the charts, the emphasis on spending has changed

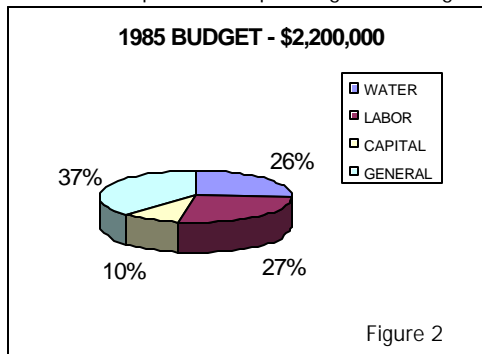


Figure 2

from District operations and improvements to the purchase of the water supply. The 2000 Budget of \$12,000,000 is based on an average year's water supply. If the water supply increases or decreases, the revenue side does

Construction Activities: those in attendance were given an update on the District's planned and recently completed construction activities. The District has completed the work on 80 acres of new sinking basins (see page 2) and plans on installing 1/2 mile of new pipeline to serve landowners west of Woodville.

Miscellaneous: discussion was held regarding the opportunity for groundwater banking within the District, Cal-Fed activities, the Tulare Irrigation District canal lining program and some of the programs that the District participates in through its involvement in other organizations.

The District's public meetings are an excellent opportunity to find out what is happening with the District. Copies of the program are available through the District office. We hope to see you at the next meeting.



US Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District
Water Control Data System

Follow state wide reservoir operations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Web Site:

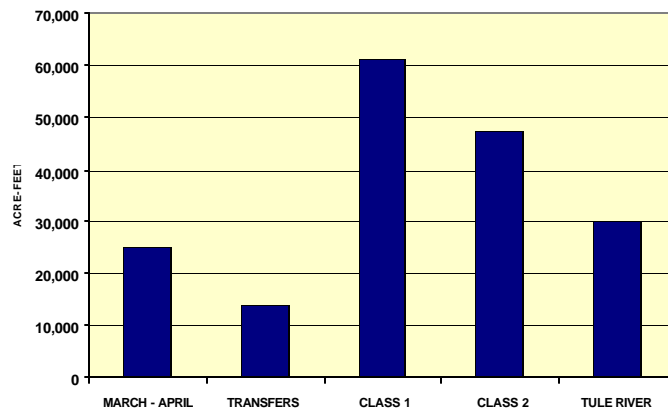
<http://www.spk-wc.usace.army.mil/>

2000 WATER SUPPLY

ROLLER COASTER RIDE CONTINUES

After beginning one of the driest years on record, California was deluged with rain in late January and February only to give way to an extremely dry March. The rains in February equate to an almost normal water supply available to the District for the 2000 water year. The water that was run in February through early April was flood release water from both Success and Millerton Reservoirs. It was thought early in

March that water would be available to the District during the entire spring and into the summer. However, forecasts that were based on normal precipitation during March and April were incrementally reduced when the rain never materialized. As a result, once the flood releases were terminated the decision was made by the Board to terminate deliveries in order that water be preserved for a summer run. At the time of



(Continued on page 4)

NEW SINKING BASIN COMPLETED

80 acres of new recharge ponds east of Road 160 and south of Avenue 144 have been completed and are now in operation. The site has been named the Hutchinson Basin in recognition of the prior owner of the property. The District acquired the property through a trade of



another 80 acre parcel owned by the District. The original parcel was located south of Avenue 128 away from any of the District's canals. The trade of properties enabled the District to install a basin in a good location for groundwater recharge as well as have a regulation facility adjacent to the District's Lateral #2. Work on

the basin began in January of 2000. The Basin was put into full operation during the February-April water run.

SEITZ PIPELINE PHASE 2 BEGINS

Work is scheduled to start on the second phase of a ditch to pipeline conversion northwest of Woodville. The original ditch was built by the landowners and was a combination of small ditch and pipeline. The first phase of the project converted 1/4 mile of ditch to pipeline along with the installation of a downstream control structure. Phase 2 will involve pipelining another 1/2 mile and the construction of another control structure. The project is intended to provide better water service as well as increasing the service area west of Woodville. All of the work will be done



Seitz Structure

by District staff. It is estimated that phase 2 of the project will cost around \$60,000.

Did you know?

From February 15th through April 14th the District brought in 60,000 acre-feet of water. Approximately 35% was sold to meet irrigation demand.

MEET THE LOWER TULE STAFF

The spring and summer months bring a lot of renewed activity to our area. Included in that is the beginning of this year's water run. The District began its 2000 water run in February with expected completion sometime in later summer. The District has six Water Service Operators on staff who cover the distribution system during those times of the year when there is water in the system. When not working in the Water Department, the Operators assist with routine maintenance and construction work. The Water Service Operators are the focus of this *Legend* edition's Meet the Staff:



Nathan Winters. Nathan has been with the District since 1991. He covers #3 Canal including the Wood Central Diversion. The #3 Canal begins at Road 216 extending West to

Road 64. Nathan lives in Porterville and enjoys bowling and basketball.

Ken Phelps. Ken has been with the District since 1994. Ken covers the Districts #1 Canal.



The #1 Canal begins at the Friant-Kern interchange at Road 208 and extends West to the Kings County line. The #1 Canal includes a number of tributary canals and pipelines. Ken is a native of Woodville

and enjoys riding motorcycles.

Bob Chavez. Bob has been with the District since 1995 having worked before at the Central California Irrigation District. Bob covers the Districts #2 Canal including Poplar Ditch and the Los Feliz Canal.



The Poplar Ditch begins at the Tule River in Porterville and extends into the District to the town of Poplar. The #2 Canal begins at the Friant-Kern and

extends west until it spills into the Los Feliz Ca-

nal which terminates at Road 40. Bob and his wife Robin live in Porterville.

Larry Maduena. Larry has been with the District since 1995. Larry covers the Districts #5 Canal and the Tule River west of Highway 99.



The #5 Canal begins at the Tule River and Highway 99 extending west to the termination at the Creighton Ranch. The Canal #5 service area includes

the Lawrence, Taylor and Cooper Ditches in the west end of the District.

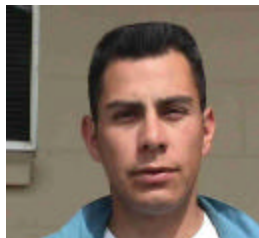
Ed Nimitz. Ed has been with the District since 1997. Ed covers the Districts #4 Canal. The #4 Canal begins at the Friant-Kern east of the District at Road 224 and extends to Highway 99.



In addition to Canal #4. Ed covers the North, South and Middle forks of the Tule River. When not working in the water department, Ed serves as the District's body

and paint man taking care of the upkeep of the District fleet. Ed lives in Tulare and is co-founder of a Tulare auto club.

Gabriel Pizano Gabriel has been with the District since 1998. Gabriel came to work for the District



as a Canal Maintenance Worker but moved to the Water Department when the District acquired the operations of the Pioneer Water Company. The Pioneer Water Company is a stockholder held water

company. The Pioneer pipeline runs from the base of Success Reservoir to an area North of Porterville. Lower Tule operates and maintains Pioneer under agreement. Gabriel serves as the operator for the entire Pioneer system. Gabriel and his wife Laurie live in Porterville and have four children.

The Lower Tule River Irrigation District has 26 full time and 2 part time employees.

The Tule River Watershed Basin Average Precipitation from October to May is 28.9 inches. As of April 17 the watershed had received 25.3 inches.

Factoid: Tulare County income from agriculture totaled more than 3 billion dollars during 1999

Lower Tule River
Irrigation District

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REMINDER: Reclamation Law forms must be current in order to receive water. All renters without landowner guarantees must have money on deposit in order to receive water. Water bills for all users not paid after 30 days are considered delinquent and will be charged an interest rate of 1.5% per month. Those needing assistance with forms are encouraged to contact the District office.

(Continued from page 2)
printing the decision had been made to resume the water run around the 22nd of May with water being available sometime into August. The availability of water late in the summer will depend on use during the months of May and June as well as any subsequent weather activity. If it looks like the available supply might again be reduced, or if demand exceeds historical numbers, then there remains a possibility that the District may go to an off and on schedule during the summer months. That scenario does not appear likely at present. The water rate for the summer run (beginning in May) has been set at \$35 per-acre foot. The water rate is reviewed monthly by the Board of Directors and is subject to change. The chart on page 2 shows the water supply available to the District for 2000 including source and amounts.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- MAY 15 — BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
- MAY 22—SUMMER WATER RUN BEGINS
- JUNE 20— SECOND INSTALLMENT DUE

CONTRACT RENEWAL UPDATE:

The Central Valley Project Contractors continue to work toward the completion of long term water service contracts with the Bureau of Reclamation. Since the last edition of the *Legend* a Friant drafting committee, including representatives of the District, worked to draft a contract in response to Reclamations proposed Fall of 1999 draft. The drafting committee produced a 47 page contract that was submitted for review by the balance of the 112 CVP Contractors. From there a contract was drafted that will be given to Reclamation for negotiation beginning the first week in May. While there has been some softening on the part of the government, a lot of time and effort has yet to be spent to insure a viable affordable water supply.

The *Legend* is published quarterly by the Lower Tule River Irrigation District. Questions about articles and items appearing in The *Legend* are encouraged. Readers are welcome to submit information they feel should be included. Both may be submitted to Daniel G. Vink, General Manager. 559-686-4716