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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.

## LOWER TULE FORMS ALLIANCE WITH CITY OF ORANGE COVE PROGRAM HERALDED AS MODEL FOR FUTURE COALITIONS

The banks of the Friant-Kern canal were the scene of an historical signing ceremony between the Lower Tule River Irrigation District and the City of Orange Cove. Officials of the respective agencies beamed with pride as they executed an important transfer agreement that will provide water management opportunities to Lower Tule and a firm water supply to the City of Orange Cove.

As framed, the transfer agreement will provide up to 2,000 acre-feet of additional water to Orange Cove. In exchange the City will make an initial payment to Lower Tule for the right to receive the water, along with annual payments for the water actually delivered under the agreement. In total, the District will receive one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the City for delivery of up to 2,000 acre-feet. The City will also pay the cost of delivery of the water on a yearly basis plus provide Lower Tule with an additional amount of money necessary to replace the water delivered to Orange Cove from Lower Tule supply.

The up-front money received by Lower Tule will be used for capital investments in the form of improvement of existing canals and recharge basins along with the development of new water management facilities (including groundwater recharge ponds and new canal systems). The annual payments will aid the District in obtaining additional supplies of Class 1 and Class 2 Friant Division water when

it is available, thereby creating a positive water balance within the District. Lower Tule's contract supply totals more than 350,000 acre-feet per year. The 2,000 acre-feet to the City of Orange Cove represents less than one-day's worth of water for Lower Tule during the summer months.

"It's exciting for me and the community and the people of Orange Cove," said the city's Mayor, Victor Lopez. "It is truly a blessing that there are people in the Friant family who care about this community," Lopez said. "I want to thank them from the bottom of my heart for giving new life to the people of Orange Cove."



Orange Cove Mayor Victor Lopez and Lower Tule Board President Ben Serafin share a handshake and a smile following the signing of the agreement.

The Lower Tule Board spent many hours over several months pouring through the details and politics of the agreement. The Board was very sensitive to the perception of "giving away water" that is very much needed in this area. However, in the end, a program was structured that will allow the District to invest up to \$1,000,000 in infrastructure and also be aggressive in going after water in wetter years.

"This agreement represents a win-win situation for Lower Tule and the City of Orange Cove," said Don MacMillan, Lower Tule River Irrigation District Vice-President. "Our board feels it is very important to continue to develop these types of strategic partnerships within the Friant community."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DJP'.

# DISTRICT RECEIVES GRANT MONEY

Through three different sources, the District has received more than \$250,000 in grant money that has been and will be used for capital improvements and environmental restoration in the District.

## NFWF Grant for DCTRA

Lower Tule, along with other members of the Deer Creek and Tule River Authority, received \$165,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to assist in the costs of construction at the Deer Creek Recharge Complex. Construction at the 250 acre site was completed in October of 2000. Prior to the start of construction, the DCTRA members applied for the NFWF grant to help offset the cost of construction. Following construction of the ponds, the Authority prepared the necessary programmatic reports and submitted the requisite paperwork to the NFWF. In March of this year the check was finally cut and the money deposited in DCTRA accounts. The work done at the site expanded the recharge capacity



DCTRA Board Accepts NFWF Grant Money

(L-R) Guido Lombardi—Porterville I.D. Bob McCloskey—Saucelito I.D. Ben Serafin—Lower Tule, George Simms—Stone Corral I.D. Joe Gastaldi—Pixley I.D. Lorren Wheaton—Terra Bella I.D.

from less than 80 acres to more than 250 acres. In addition, the ponds were constructed with wildlife-sensitive features. Specific features include contoured levies, nesting islands and native vegetation. Since the construction of initial ponds in

1995, more than 16,000 acre-feet of water has been recharged by Authority members at the Deer Creek complex. The Authority has also received awards and recognition from various environmental organizations.

Lower Tule has a 47% interest in all DCTRA assets including the Deer Creek Complex. In addition, Lower Tule was reimbursed for \$175,000 worth of work performed by District crews at the Complex.

## Toledo Basin Grant

Lower Tule has partnered with the Department of Fish & Game and the Bureau of Reclamation to receive \$86,000 for habitat improvements at the District's Toledo Basin site. The Toledo Basin is adjacent to Avenue 144 between Road 89 and



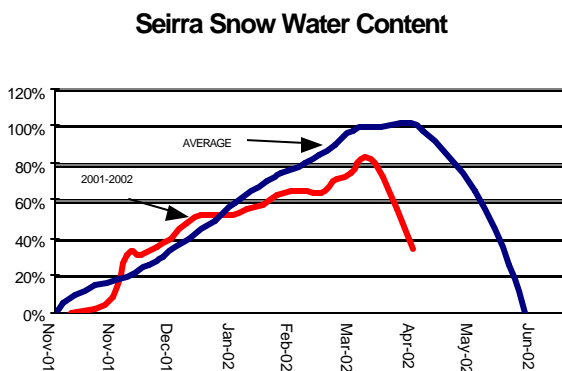
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# WATER SUPPLY REPORT

2002 will go down as the wet year that never was. As you can see by the chart below, 2002 started out above average, then lost considerable steam in January, and looks to finish about 20% below average for the year. The latest declaration from the Bureau of Reclamation has the Class I supply at 100% and the Class II at 0%. The Class I supply will not change and there remains a possibility that the Class II supply could increase by 3-7% before July.



acre-feet) it is expected that the first run will begin in the middle of May and last through the first week in June.

Without a substantial Class II declaration it is expected that the summer run will be similar to last year which included breaks of 10-15 days between runs. It is the goal of the Board to begin the run in late May and extend it through July. On/of periods will be scheduled as needed to meet that goal and will be announced in advance.

Many of you have asked when the summer water supply run will begin and how long it will last. While that answer is still somewhat tentative, the Board has committed to the first run beginning in May. Given the water supply available (approx. 90,000

acre-feet) it is expected that the first run will begin in the middle of May and last through the first week in June.

www.ltrid.org

# CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS CONTINUE



**Westside Inter-tie (above and below)**

Construction work continues on the first phase of the Westside Inter-tie. While working simultaneously on the Seitz project, District crews are finishing the first section of the Inter-tie that, when completed, will carry water from Lateral #5 South to Lateral #1. (See January edition of the *Legend* for a complete project description).

The last major work on Phase I involved the crossing at Avenue 152. In February, District crews began construction on the upstream structure at



Avenue 152, biding their time for the weather to clear in order to cross the road with two barrels of six-foot diameter pipe. Since the crossing involved a complete blockage and detour of Avenue 152, it was important that there be no fog or inclement weather on the day of the road cutting. On April 17th, a heavy lifting crane was brought in to assist District crews in setting the pipe more than 10 feet below ground. Despite morning rains, the job was completed in the one day time frame allotted by the County of Tulare (who controls road work). With the exception of the heavy-lifting crane, the entire job was done with District crews and equipment.

With the installation of the pipe completed, con-

struction on the downstream structure will begin. The downstream structure is the last major component of Phase I which will deliver water from Lateral #5 through to Lateral #3. Since the 2002 water run is expected to be intermittent (see story on page 2), use of the Inter-tie during 2002 will be critical. The Inter-tie will allow users on Lateral #3 to access water from Lateral #5 and alleviate potential capacity problems. Once Phase I is complete and operational, an analysis will begin to determine capacity and construction timing for the balance of the project. The First Phase will be operational by June 1, 2002.

## Seitz Ditch (below)

Construction is complete on the rehabilitation and extension of the Seitz Ditch. The Seitz Ditch is a small lateral of Canal #3 and serves the area around Woodville. The Seitz project involved the conversion of more than 2 miles of dilapidated ditch into a 24-inch pipeline. In addition, the Ditch (pipe) was extended more than 1 mile to cover 200-acres that, prior to construction, had not been able to receive District water. The project was done entirely by District crews and took less than 60 days to complete.



## OFFICE CONSTRUCTION

Progress continues on the construction of a new office building for the Lower Tule River Irrigation District in the town of Tipton. Work has been slowed somewhat through repeated architectural delays, but the project remains on track for construction during the summer and fall of 2002. It is expected that a final set of plans will be completed by early May with an award of a construction contract scheduled for mid-May.

Preliminary site work has been completed with the construction of a building pad, pond relocation and fencing being done by District crews and outside contractors. A contract for installation of water and sewer service to the site has also been awarded. Water and sewer service will be provided by the Tipton Community Services District.

## Water Facts: (Or Fiction?)

- California has more than nine million acres of irrigated agriculture, an area about the combined size of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and the most of any U.S. state
- Agriculture accounts for over 80 percent of all the water used in California.
- Alfalfa consumes almost 25 percent of California's irrigation water -- more water than any other crop in the state -- but accounts for less than 4 percent of the state's agricultural revenue.
- Almost nine times more water is used on California alfalfa fields than is used in the city of Los Angeles.

Source: NRDC.org

**Consider the source!**

Lower Tule River  
Irrigation District

16563 Road 168  
P.O. Box 4388  
Porterville, California  
93258-4388

Phone: 559-686-4716  
Fax: 559-686-0151  
Email: ltrid@ltrid.org



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needs now and into  
our future*

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## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 27—Memorial Day Holiday—Office Closed
- June 20—Second Installment of 2002 Assessment Due

*(Continued from page 2)*

Road 72. The 160 acre District owned site has become home to half of the world's Tri-colored Blackbird population. The Tri-colored Blackbird is a protected species under the Migratory Bird Act and is becoming closer to being listed as an endangered species. The Toledo Basin has become an attractive site for the birds because of its proximity to a number of dairies and silage fields. The basins provide the water and nesting source for the birds while they feed on the wheat and corn fields in the area. The problem arises when there is no water at the Toledo site during the nesting season (February to May). When that happens, as has been the case for the past two years, the birds nest in the adjacent fields. If the birds nest outside of the Toledo Basins, then the Fish and Wildlife Service delays local silage operations in order to protect the Tri-colored Blackbirds. Should the Tri-colors become an endangered species, then local farming practices would be subject to ESA rules whereby har-

vesting could be stopped and violators subject to legal ramifications if a bird were killed or a nest destroyed.

In an effort to avoid that situation, the District began working cooperatively with local landowners and the Department of Fish and Game. The ultimate goal is to provide an alternative site to the local farm ground where the birds can nest and prosper on a year to year basis. Forty acres at the Toledo site has now been set aside for that purpose. The Lower Tule Board felt it could help the landowners in the area by "taking the hit" in terms of set-aside ground. Lower Tule and the Department of Fish & Game will be working with adjacent landowners to provide information on how to haze the birds from private property onto the Toledo Site. The grant money will be used to make the ponds more habitat friendly and to provide for the installation of a well at the site that will be able to supply water in dry years during the critical nesting period. Once constructed, the well will be deeded to and controlled by Lower Tule.



A beautiful April Saturday at Mooney Grove Park was the setting for the annual Lower Tule & Pixley friends and family day picnic. Employees, Directors and their families gathered to play softball, toss horseshoes and enjoy an afternoon of socializing. A good time was had by all.

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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 Lower Tule River Irrigation District. 559-686-4716