

DISTRICT POLICY ON USE OF RECHARGE FACILITIES

Background

One of the purposes of the Lower Tule River Irrigation District is to enhance the groundwater resources that underlie the District through the importation of surface water. The District overlies the Tule Subbasin Groundwater Basin, which has been defined by the State of California as being in a state of critical overdraft. Since its formation in 1950, the District has imported as much surface water as possible to offset the use of groundwater for irrigation purposes and to replenish the aquifer through direct recharge via sinking basins, river channels and unlined canals. The District's efforts are funded through assessments and water charges paid by landowners in the District.

In 2014, the State of California passed the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), which regulates the use of groundwater in the State of California. Groundwater Sustainability Plans, under SGMA, are to be implemented by January 1, 2020. As part of the SGMA process the District GSA has determined that in addition to the District recharging groundwater on behalf of all landowners, it will also be important for the landowners to be able to recharge groundwater and create groundwater pumping credits.

The Board of Directors of Lower Tule Irrigation District therefore adopts the following Policy:

DISTRICT USE OF LANDOWNER OWNED RECHARGE FACILITIES

In the event that the District is in full recharge mode, meaning the District owned recharge facilities are all being used to maximum capacity, and a landowner who owns recharge facilities wants to make their facilities available for District use for recharge on behalf of all District lands, the groundwater credits generated from this recharge activity will be shared as follows: 75% of the credits allocated to the District on behalf of all landowners and 25% of the credits allocated to the landowner owning the recharge facility.

LANDOWNER USE OF DISTRICT OWNED RECHARGE FACILITIES

In the event that a Landowner has water **purchased from the District** in excess of irrigation needs available for recharge, and the District has available capacity in recharge facilities, upon approval of the District, the landowner can recharge water in the District facilities and the groundwater credits generated from this recharge activity will be shared as follows: 25% of the credits allocated to the District on behalf of all landowners and 75% of the credits allocated to the landowner owning the recharge facility. Landowner use of District Recharge facilities cannot interrupt or interfere with District recharge activities.

The District Board will update this policy as conditions warrant, based on operational and policy issues identified as the policy is implemented.