Our History

Organization of the CENTRAL CALIFORNIA IRRIGATION DISTRICT occurred under the provisions of the California Irrigation District Act and was approved by a vote of the people held on October 9, 1951.

The early history of our canal system and its various parent companies dates back to March 7, 1865. Mr. John Bensley became involved in a corporation formed to build an irrigation and barge canal system that would connect Tulare Lake Basin with the San Joaquin River at Mendota Pool. From here he would build a new canal system connecting the Mendota Pool with the Sacramento, San Joaquin Delta, San Francisco Bay, and the Pacific Ocean -- all of which was no small undertaking. Construction began on the first leg in the Tulare Lake Basin in 1852.

In order for the newly formed corporation to succeed it needed assurances that irrigation water could be sold from the canal system as it traversed the valley floor. By the early 1870's, the Miller & Lux holdings had already established control of much of the land immediately to the north of the Mendota Dam site. Thus, the financial dependency of the fledgling company required it to strike a deal with the Miller & Lux interests.

Under the agreement entered into on May 18, 1871, Miller & Lux subsidized the newly formed canal company. In exchange, the newly formed company agreed to provide Miller & Lux with a discounted price on irrigation and livestock water. This same year also witnessed the construction of the first permanent dam facility at the Mendota Pool. The new structure impounded the entire flow of the San Joaquin River and Fresno Slough, redirecting these to the headworks of the newly constructed Main Canal.

Unfortunately for its investors, the canal company never proved to be a financial success. As they became more and more disenchanted, Miller & Lux was ever ready to purchase outstanding stock at a greatly reduced price. These stock acquisitions continued until Miller & Lux finally wrestled control away from the original investors. As the major stockholder, they immediately embarked on a rapid fire campaign of canal construction. From the early 1870's through the 1920's, virtually all construction of what is now the Central California Irrigation District occurred.

In 1933, the United States Department of Interior negotiated with the heirs of Miller & Lux for the acquisition of the riparian rights from the area which is now identified as the Grassland Water District. At the same time they negotiated for an exchange of water between the Central Valley Project and Miller & Lux’s riparian water rights on the San Joaquin River. As part of the Central Valley Project (CVP) the United States proposed to construct and operate a new dam on the Sacramento River above Shasta. Transport of water stored behind this facility would be down the Sacramento River to the Delta. It
would then be pumped from the Delta into the newly constructed Delta-Mendota Canal terminating at the Mendota Pool. In addition, as part of the project Miller & Lux exchanged water rights to the San Joaquin for water from the CVP. Water from these rights would be impounded behind what is now Friant Dam, where it would be redistributed along the east side of the valley through the Friant Kern Canal.

Obviously, a major ingredient of this entire project was the negotiation of an exchange of waters between heirs of Henry Miller and the Federal government. Without such an agreement there would have been no Central Valley Project. The parties finally reached an agreement in 1937. This accord, "The Exchange Contract," remains the backbone of Central California Irrigation District's water supply to this day.

As earlier mentioned, Central California Irrigation District came into being in 1951 as a result of an election by landowners who were then receiving water from the San Joaquin Canal Company, a former Miller & Lux holding. Shortly after this, landowners held a second election for the purpose of levying a general obligation bond against the properties within the newly formed District. Through the sale of these bonds, they raised enough capital to purchase the assets, including the water rights and distribution system, from the San Joaquin Canal Company. In 1954, the newly formed district took over operation of the Canal Company.
2019 CCID WATER AWARENESS SCHOLARSHIP
Due Date: Thursday, April 4, 2019

A. For 2018, the Board of Directors of the Central California Irrigation District (CCID) is sponsoring a scholarship, which will be available to any students who meet either of the following criteria:

1. A graduating high school student from any of the five school districts within the CCID service area:
   - Newman-Crows Landing Unified School District
   - Gustine Unified School District
   - Los Banos Unified School District
   - Dos Palos-Oro Loma Unified School District
   - Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified School District

   -OR-

2. A student graduating from any high school, whose parents or grandparents either farm or own land in CCID or the other member agencies of the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors (Columbia Canal Company, Firebaugh Canal Water District and San Luis Canal Company).

B. The scholarship will consist of at least $500.00. The money will be paid in two equal installments to the recipient: one-half after proof of registration at the beginning of the first semester or quarter; and one-half after proof of registration for the second semester or quarter.

C. The Board of Directors has requested donations from the District’s landowners and consumers, and there will be one or more additional scholarships offered this year, depending upon how much money is received. (Nine scholarships were awarded in 2018, for a total of $7,250.)

D. The scholarship will be available to students seeking education beyond high school in any field at any accredited college or university, community college, or trade or vocational school.

E. Applicants must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0.
F. Applicants must submit an essay of a minimum of 300 words. The essay should include some or all of the following elements:

- The history and current status of the CCID water supply
- The importance and value of the Exchange Contract to CCID farmers in a drought year
- The effect of State and Federal regulations on the District’s ability to receive its full water supply
- The importance of local agriculture
- The applicant’s vision as to what part he or she may be playing in local agriculture in the future

It is suggested that applicants contact Board members, farmers and employees of CCID for information. Some general information about CCID can also be found on the District’s website, www.ccidwater.org.

G. The criteria for selection will be:

1. Essay contents (70%, broken down as follows: 50% for contents; 10% for organization; and 10% for presentation)
2. Scholastic records (15%)
3. All activities and service (15%)

H. A committee appointed by the CCID Board of Directors will make the final selection.

I. The application package is to be returned to the CCID Main Office, located at 1335 West “I” Street, Los Banos, or may be mailed to:

   Central California Irrigation District
   Scholarship Committee
   P.O. Box 1231
   Los Banos, CA 93635

J. Applications must be received by the District no later than 5:00 p.m., Thursday, April 4, 2019, and must include:

1. A completed application form
2. An unofficial copy of the transcript
3. The essay, as described in paragraph F above
2019 CCID WATER AWARENESS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM
DUE: Thursday, April 4, 2019 by 5:00 p.m.

Student’s Name: ________________________________
Student’s Address: ________________________________
Phone Number: ________________________________ E-mail address: ________________________________
Father’s Occupation: ________________________________ Where Employed: ________________________________
Mother’s Occupation: ________________________________ Where Employed: ________________________________
High School Attending: ________________________________ Graduation Date: ________________________________
Honors and Awards: ________________________________

________________________________________________

Offices held in class or school organizations: ________________________________

________________________________________________

Record of participation in extracurricular school activities: ________________________________

________________________________________________

Community or area services you have performed: ________________________________

________________________________________________

Name and relationship of family member who owns or farms in CCID or one of the other Exchange Contractors water agencies (for applicants who are graduating from high school outside the service area):

________________________________________________

Institution you plan to attend: ________________________________

Your major education goal and vocation: ________________________________

________________________________________________

Have you already made your application and been accepted to the school? ________________________________

List of sources you contacted for information for the essay: ________________________________

________________________________________________

The applicant hereby authorizes high school representatives to release transcripts to the CCID Scholarship Committee if requested. Permission is granted to the Committee to publish and/or duplicate the essay submitted by the applicant, either in whole or in part.

________________________________________________  __________________________________________________
Date                                                Signature of Student

________________________________________________  __________________________________________________
Date                                                Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian
Water Board delays decision on river inflows

A whirlwind of activity swept through Sacramento as the State Water Resources Control Board announced they were delaying a final decision on increased flows remaining in San Joaquin River tributaries, followed by a rally that attracted more than 1,000 folks protesting the pending decision, to one-and-a-half days of public testimony submitted to the Board and, finally, an announcement by the Board that it will continue their meeting on Nov. 7.

"We were hearing comments that the delay might be forthcoming but did not really know that it would happen until the initial announcement," commented General Manager Chris White of the Central California Irrigation District. "Hopefully, the Board will consider the testimony that was presented at their Aug. 21-22 meeting and realize that information prepared by their staff was faulty."

White explained that the proposal would have left 40 percent of flows in the Tuolumne, Merced and Stanislaus rivers during the early months of the year, resulting in a loss of water deliveries to farms, cities and others in the northern San Joaquin Valley. The range of diversions were actually proposed at 30 to 50 percent in the staff recommendation.

The increased flows are necessary to protect the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and declining salmon populations, according to the Board.

"The information presented to the Board by their staff grossly underestimated the economic and personal loss that would be suffered by farmers and residents," White added.

Losses underestimated

While the Board’s staff estimated economic losses at $30-40 million, local officials in the affected area pegged the losses at more than $1.6 billion.

"The initial impacts from increasing the in-river flows would have little direct connection to our growers in CCID," White said. "But a second phase to the ruling would have created similar impacts to the Sacramento River watershed and that could have a significant impact to water flowing through and from the Delta. That's our water source and we must be protective of it."

CCID’s White adds new role to current position

CCID General Manager Chris White has assumed the position of the Exchange Contractors Executive Director while continuing to fill his existing role at CCID for the next 12 months. Former Exchange Contractors Executive Director Steve Chedester will fill a new role as Managing Director of Policies and Programs.

"I am excited about this new opportunity to serve both organizations for the next year," said White. "The timeframe allows the CCID Directors to carefully plan for the administrative changes that will take place in the future."

"It was important that CCID’s operations continue at the high level it currently enjoys as it serves its landowners and the new arrangement preserves that efficiency," he added.

The changes became effective Sept. 7, 2018.
Micro-sprinklers play role in planting new almond orchard

John Van Ruler made a career change back in the 1970s when he departed the construction business and became a farmer. He formed Van Ruler Orchards in the late 1990s with a 70-acre almond orchard near Salida and later expanded to a second location near Hilmar.

His two sons, John and Brent, got a taste of what farming was like as they grew up. When it came time to make a career choice, young John opted to stay on the farm while Brent entered the construction business. Several years ago, Brent returned to the farm to partner with his brother.

A purchase of 29 acres near Newman provided not only a home for Brent but the opportunity to put their experience to the test with the planting of a new almond orchard.

“We evaluated the prospects of planting the new orchard and all our questions resulted in answers that kept us moving forward,” says John. “We knew water was the most important issue and learning that the location was serviced by Central California Irrigation District was a major plus for us.

“This was our first experience working with CCID and it couldn’t have been better.”

While waiting for the close of escrow that was dependent on the harvest of an existing hay crop, John and his brother were busy planning an irrigation system. They worked to design a system that features a micro-sprinkler at each of the 3,300 trees across the acreage. Two main laterals run through the acreage.

“The micro-sprinklers enable us to apply the water direct to where it is needed,” John explains. “Right after escrow closed, we went in and deep-ripped and bedded up the ground.”

The brothers selected nonpareil Bennet-Hickman as the variety to plant.

“We purchased potted plants and that meant the root system was compact, which enables the micro sprinkler to cover the ground over the top of the roots. Once the trees mature and the roots spread, we’ll switch out the micro-sprinklers to cover a wider area,” he says.

At a flow rate of 9.2 gallons per tree, about 30 gallons are applied to each tree during one irrigation. Irrigations are scheduled usually every 3-5 days and last for three hours. The total amount applied is expected to be about 1 foot per acre while the trees are small. That amount will increase to around 2.5 to 3-acre foot per acre on an annual basis when the trees mature.

John applied to CCID’s grant program that provides a 25 percent cost-share for irrigation enhancements up to $400 per acre. Improvements include micro-sprinklers, drip systems, railwater return systems, dairy-related projects and other irrigation efficiency improvements. His application was approved.

“We’re expecting our first harvest at third leaf,” says John. “At least that is what our checkbook is saying.”
Storage goal of 50,000 AF sought

Central California Irrigation District is moving forward with efforts to achieve 50,000 acre-feet of additional storage for farmers in the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractor’s service area.

“The goal to increase water reliability in years of water shortages resulting from drought and environmental regulations is essential for our farmers,” emphasized CCID General Manager Chris White. “We need 50,000 acre-feet during critically dry years to protect water supply and farming operations.”

White explained that CCID has been working with other Exchange Contractors’ entities to “investigate and develop potential storage projects where appropriate to benefit the Exchange Contractors.”

Part of that investigation includes pursuing grant funding for the Orestimba recharge project.

Water Board delays

continued from page one

Despite the lack of direct impacts from the phase one ruling, White noted that CCID and the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority had been active in supporting the east side interests.

“We have to be involved,” he said.

Non-flow measures

White is holding out hope that testimony presented by Director Chuck Bonham of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife would result in a reasonable settlement of the flows issue. Bonham was the last individual to address the Water Board during the two-day hearing. Bonham told the Board that he is committed to submitting an integrated plan to the board that would include “a robust package of non-flow measures” to enhance the Delta environment and the salmon population.

Assemblyman Adam Gray lead off the public testimony during the two-day hearing and challenged the efforts of the Water Board and its staff.

“If you can’t be responsible, I can guarantee you that the Legislature will revisit your authority,” he said.

Stanislaus County Supervisor and former Assembly member Kristin Olsen followed Gray and also questioned the Board’s actions, calling the proposal “misguided.”

“Over the last six years we have tried to work cooperatively with you,” she said. “But the Board has refused to show any flexibility.”

Modesto Irrigation Director John Measinger recounted that more than 10,000 comments had been submitted to the Water Board’s proposal with only 24 responses issued.

“You’re not making it easy, but we are committed to working with you,” Mensinger testified. “Anything short of a voluntary settlement will be irresponsible.”

Voices ring loud at Sacramento water rally

Assembly member Adam Gray (D-Merced) issued a call to individuals and groups opposed to the increased in-flows by the State Water Resources Control Board to San Joaquin River tributaries to rally at the capital building in Sacramento to express their displeasure. The Aug. 20 rally went on as planned despite the Water Board delaying their final vote, which was originally scheduled for Aug. 21.

More than a thousand individuals waving signs responded to Gray and showed up at the capital. The crowd was full of farmers, FFA students, business people and more. The Atwater High School marching band provided music for the rally.

Comments by the speakers during the rally included:

“The Water Board is out of touch with reality. If need be we’ll take this to the ballot.” — Assembly member Adam Gray

“During the last 25 years we have lost 24 percent of our water, yet we are growing 35 percent more food. That’s efficient.”

— California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson.

“We’ve been fighting for our water for too long. It’s time to stand up.” — Assembly member Rudy Silas Jr.

“We sent a letter to the Water Board. They wouldn’t meet with us.” — Superintendent Jose Gonzalez, Planada Elementary School District.

“It’s time to fix our broken water system.”

— Congressman Jim Costa.
A look back...

50 Years Ago – Fall 1968
- It was reported that the "coffer dam" constructed of corrugated metal, reinforced with flat steel had been used on 5 takeouts with great success and it was believed that this new device would enable the District to repair many takeout gates while water remained in the canal.

25 Years Ago – Fall 1993
- The Areias Dairy approached the District with a plan to transfer their surface water to an urban district under provisions of the Miller-Bradley Bill (PL 102-575). The Board advised the Areias family to be very cautious entering into any long-term agreements and stated they would continue to study the proposal.

10 Years Ago – Fall 2007
- The Board held a Special Meeting in June to revise the water rate schedule through the summer. Our growers responded well, reducing consumption by about 15%. The Bureau ended the restriction August 24 and the Board voted to return to the previously established rates for the balance of the year.
Bureau declares ‘non-critical’ year; 100 percent allocation announced

“Thank goodness for the rain fall in March.”

That comment at the recent CCID Growers Meeting prompted a round of applause as CCID General Manager Chris White talked about a projected 100 percent of contracted water deliveries for the current year.

White identified the inflow of water into Shasta Reservoir as key to the reservoir’s rising level that opened the door for the Bureau of Reclamation to announce a “non-critical” year, resulting in the 100 percent allocation.

“The Bureau continues with a monthly assessment of the allocation and there is always a possibility that the 100 percent allocation could change,” said White, prior to the Growers Meeting. “But the reality of that happening is lessening as time goes by and periodic storms sweep through the north state.”

“There is very little chance that Exchange Contract water will be required from Millerton Reservoir behind Friant Dam,” said White, in reference to the water storage conditions in Shasta Reservoir. As of April 15, 2018, Shasta Reservoir was at 90 percent capacity with 4.1 million acre-feet.

White acknowledged that Westside Central Valley Project water users will only receive 20 percent of their contracted supply because of the “uncertainty” of environmental regulations. He expressed hope that the allocation could soon be increased.

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**CCID 2018 Normal Year Water Rates**

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</table>

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A portion of the crowd that attended the recent CCID Growers Meeting.
Dennis Soares lives by an adage he learned early in his career – “Watch what successful people are doing and then learn from them.”

During the 1990s he witnessed farms beginning to switch their operations from field crops to almonds and decided there were too many advantages to pass up. So, he decided to leave 21 years of experience working for Anderson & Clayton Company as vice-president of Northern Operations California to jump into the almond business, along with his wife Janet.

From Cotton to Almonds

“It was a challenging decision to make but all the factors pointed to a switch,” says Soares, “less employees and less machinery equipment trips up and down the field.”

“Prior to Roundup-ready crops, farmers were performing multiple cultural operations in the fields and creating compaction in the soil,” he explains. “We still do some compacting of the soil in the almonds to minimize the dirt when we sweep up the almonds.”

Soares eventually partnered with David and Paul Parreira at RPAC Almond Handler & Processor as a Managing Partner. In addition to the group’s almond plantings, Soares also has acreage in partnership with Janet as Soares Farms.

Four years ago the husband-wife partnership purchased 59 acres that had been harvested of its corn crop. Following harvest, the ground was left idle for a year before the planting of 7,200 almond trees on a 16’ x 22’ spacig in October 2016.

“We worked the organic material into the field, along with 6 tons of manure compost as we prepared to plant the trees,” he recalls. “In addition to adding the nutrients to the soil, the organic material also helps to hold the moisture in the ground.”

The availability and cost of water was an important part of the decision to purchase the acreage. The field is adjacent to the Outside Canal operated by the Central California Irrigation District.

Water Price Drops

“We are so fortunate to be in CCID,” Soares emphasizes. “The reliability of receiving water throughout the growing season at a reasonable cost is important for any farmer.”

Soares also applied for a grant from CCID’s “On-Farm Water Conservation Program” to partially finance the installation of his irrigation system on the 56 acres planted to almonds.

“It’s a great program and there was no hesitancy on our part to apply,” he says. “I’m not real computer savvy but Tracey (Rosin, CCID’s Conservation Coordinator) walked me through the on-line process for the application.

“Farmers within the CCID are extremely fortunate to have this program available to us.”

Soares contracted with Gene Blocker of Landmark Irrigation to not only install the irrigation system but to also plant, prune and tie the trees, as well as consulting.

Trees from Sierra Gold

Alternate rows of the orchard are planted to Nonpareil and Monterey varieties. Both are planted on an Caperian 1 rootstock developed by Sierra Gold Nursery.

“I’ve noticed that these traditional varieties usually perform well,” he adds. “This is the first time I planted trees from Sierra Gold. Orchards planted with their trees have always looked good to me; so, I made the decision to go with them.”

The decision was not the easiest, especially with a neighboring orchard planted to the new Independence variety. Independence requires less bees for pollination and features a onetime harvest that could reach 1,000 pounds per acre at third leaf. Traditional varieties like the Nonpareil and Monterey are expected to yield 300-700 pounds in their third year.

A drive along the end of Soares’ orchard reveals three rows of irrigation hose on top of each berm. One row features micro-sprinklers placed next to each tree that were used to grow the trees during their first two years. The sprinklers will soon be moved to the middles between the trees.

Continued on next page
Red Top pumping agreement already slowing subsidence

A n agreement to reduce the pumping of groundwater and replacing it with surface water purchased from other districts and delivered by CCID has already resulted in a slowing of subsidence in the Red Top area just outside of the district and at Sack Dam.

Discussions have been ongoing with several individual landowners in the area that has formed the Triangle T Water District. The results of those talks have been an agreement to voluntarily reduce the pumping of groundwater in exchange for a pipeline constructed at CCID expense to deliver water that the new water district purchases.

"The new agreement allows them to go out on the market and buy transfer water and have it delivered through the pipeline under the river," explained CCID General Manager Chris White. "They have purchased more than 5,000 acre-feet and delivery through the pipeline has begun."

"As a result of the agreement, we have seen a significant reduction in the rate of subsidence that affects our facilities and Sack Dam. Previously, subsidence at Sack Dam was recorded at a rate of one-half-foot per year three years ago. It is now less than two inches per year."

The agreement establishes a five-year schedule to limit groundwater pumping from the deep aquifer. The ultimate goal is to reach 3/4 acre-foot per acre per year reduction in five years. The agreement also establishes an independent expert panel to review numbers and make recommendations for shallow and deep pumping, based on water demand.

Landowners within the new district will follow 3 percent of their lands for the purpose of creating percolation or recharge basins.

Watching successful people leads to water-efficient orchard

Continued from previous page

The remaining two rows of hoses include drip emitters that will work toward spreading the root system for each tree.

"I spent extra to have both systems. The cost, along with the drip system filters, was about $2,500 per acre," he admits. "That's where the CCID grant really helped."

Costs also mounted after the planting of the "potted" trees because of the Santa Nella area winds that come off the Coastal Range to the west and whip across the fields.

"The trees were planted with bamboo stakes, but it didn't take long for the winds to bend the heavily leaved trees," explains Soares. "A metal stake was added to the right of the tree and eventually a second metal stake was placed to the left of the tree."

The benefit of adding the two stakes and multiple pruning events is easily seen today with a bowl-shaped canopy.

"The sun will be able to shine in the middle of the tree and we should get some long-term fruit-setting on the inside," he says.

Family Business

Janet handles all the bookkeeping for the multiple partnerships that they have. Dennis and Janet can only dream of their two children returning to the farm; knowing their careers will likely take them in a different direction. Their son, Dylan, is currently attending Harvard Law School with a focus on water law. He previously received an Ag Engineering Degree from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Daughter Christina also attended Cal Poly and received a degree in Viticulture and Enology. She is presently working for Tailey Winery and plans on applying for a Master's program in International Marketing.

Dennis' advice to their children as they move forward with their studies -- "Always stay focused in a positive direction."
**A look back...**

**50 Years Ago — Spring 1968**
- Harry G. Fawcett was recognized with a Board Resolution for having been a leader through the formative years of Central California Irrigation District and serving as a Director of Division #3, including as President from 1962 until his passing in April of 1968. Mr. Fawcett was an honored, respected man who was a faithful and dedicated public servant.

**25 Years Ago — Spring 1993**
- The first part of 1993 saw the announcement of a normal water allocation of 3.1 a.f. per acre comprised of 2.75 a.f. per acre of Bureau surface water and 0.35 a.f. per acre of well water developed from District wells. A three-tier water rate was established of $8.00 per a.f. for Bureau water, $25.00 per a.f. for developed water and $40.00 per a.f. for purchased water. The formation of the CCID Scholarship Committee, completely funded by its Directors through their donations, began with $500 being offered to area high school seniors.

**10 Years Ago — Spring 2007**
- The Shasta Reservoir was at 71% of average and pumping restrictions were in effect due to the Delta Smelt, causing a Federal pumping reduction from three pumping units and 2,649 c.f.s. to one unit for about 1,000 c.f.s. It was anticipated that reduced pumping would remain in effect until mid-June and potentially impact water deliveries to the Exchange Contractors.