

Spring 2014

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### KDWCD Vision Statement

Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District's vision is to protect, conserve, and maintain the Kaweah Basin's water resources through actively pursuing a comprehensive understanding of the region's water resources and through the management of those resources to their fullest potential. The District strives to achieve its vision by engaging in the following core directives:

- Monitoring water resources and demands
- Conserving and enhancing available water resources, both local and regional,
- Investigating and evaluating the Region's water resources,
- Conserving and protecting Kaweah Basin water rights,
- Preventing the interference with/or diminutions of natural flow, and
- Protecting lands from flood or overflow

### Inside this Issue

New 3rd Party Group to represent growers on ILRP Issues

Project to Decommission Abandoned Wells

Real-time Weather Data Helps Ag

Californians Saving Water

2014 Water Bond



## **New 3rd Party Group Will Assist Kaweah Basin Growers**

Since 2002, the Kaweah River Sub-watershed has kept a keen eye on local agriculture's surface water discharges, particularly since the implementation of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) was adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board).

The ILRP regulates agricultural discharges, which includes irrigation runoff, flows from tile drains, and storm water runoff, by issuing waste discharge requirements or conditional waivers to help prevent this runoff from polluting water sources. Additionally, the ILRP requires farmers and landowners to adhere to strict water quality monitoring requirements.

The ILRP focuses on water quality sampling and testing, and the resulting Management Plans, had been aimed at surface water and surface water channels. With the Regional Board's adoption last year of the new General Order, the ILRP focus broadened to include groundwater quality related issues. Farmers in the Kaweah Basin have been represented by the Kaweah River Sub-watershed, which has been supported by the Kaweah and St. Johns Rivers Association (KSJRA) and managed by staff at the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District (KDWCD).

Due to the ever increasing obligations of the ILRP, and now with the addition of groundwater monitoring and reporting in the new General Order, the local KSJRA Board, a surface water right organization, determined that it no longer was in a position to offer farmers third-party representation (a position also supported by the KDWCD Board).

As a result, a new nonprofit organization – the Kaweah Basin Water Quality Association (KBWQA) – has been created to represent farmers specifically in the Kaweah River area. The KBWQA has already begun signing, anew, the previously represented farmers, and are just getting started in their outreach to farmers whom weren't participants previously. Starting early 2015, this new

Association will step into the groundwater monitoring and reporting regulation that is expected to encompass participants totaling 200,000 acres.

"It is very important that local management of both surface and groundwater quality be implemented under this new General Order, despite of the fact that we don't yet know the width and breadth of this program at full implementation," said Mark Larsen, General Manager of the KDWCD. "This new organization is uniquely staffed to professionally implement the new requirements and monitoring programs with expert staff that has the focus of the landowner needs in mind."

Both the KSJRA and KDWCD are committed to providing a smooth transition for landowners involved in the General Order. Any person or persons who owns commercial irrigated cropland within the Kaweah area is eligible to join the new Association through an application process and the payment of the assessment as established by the nine person Board. Current assessments range from \$8.40/acre for farmers who participated in the surface water program, to just under \$10/acre for new farmers signing up under the new order.

The KBWQA has committed to improve conditions and developing efficiencies for agricultural landowners by engaging in activities, such as water quality monitoring, testing and reporting, and establishing best management practices in the Kaweah area.

Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group, an engineering and consulting firm that has served the Valley's agricultural industry since 1968, was selected by the new organization's board to manage the Association's day-to-day activities and to implement the provisions of the General Order. The group's extensive experience will ensure that farmers' needs are met and regulatory issues are satisfied.

For more information about the Kaweah Basin Water Quality Association, please call: Donald Ikemiya, or Tom Glover at (559) 636-1166.



**New KBWQA Logo**



**Project Will Decommission Abandoned Wells**

Abandoned water wells pose serious health hazards, and the County of Tulare is working to eliminate those risks with the help of approximately \$350,000 in grant funds provided by the State of California Department of Water Resources and it's Proposition 84 Rd 1 Implementation Grant funding source. This project is made possible by the County of Tulare due to it's involvement in the Integrated Regional Water Management group led by the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District.

As part of the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, the County will use the grant to implement the Groundwater Quality Protection and Investigation Project, which is expected to properly decommission 80 abandoned domestic wells in the Kaweah River Basin area.

An abandoned well is a water well that is no longer used to withdraw water from the aquifer. In fact, the Tulare County Water Well Ordinance states that a well that has been inactive for a year or more, is required to be destroyed by capping or sealing.

Since these wells are essentially holes in the ground, several health hazards exist, including the risk of injury or death by falling, groundwater contamination or comingling, and the loss of aquifer pressure.

**Real-Time Weather Data Helps Ag Irrigate Efficiently**

Often time people see farmers irrigating in the middle of the day and wonder, "What are farmers doing to conserve water?" Well, the answer in simple terms: plenty.

With water resources becoming increasingly scarce, particularly in times of drought, farmers must manage more carefully than ever their shrinking water supplies.

For most growers, this means having efficient irrigation systems and using state-of-the-art technology to ensure that when water is applied to a crop, it is the right amount at the right time.

Many growers use real-time weather data in conjunction with their irrigation systems to time their irrigations. Using programs, such as CIMIS, or California Irrigation Management Information System, farmers are able to tap in to real-time weather information, which is synced with their irrigation systems. Because accurate weather data are used, irrigation systems adjust accordingly in order to provide the most efficient irrigation for a crop.

CIMIS manages more than 120 automated weather stations throughout California. The weather stations collect weather data on a minute-by-minute basis; calculate hourly

Landowners ultimately have the responsibility for any abandoned wells on their property. By decommissioning the wells that are no longer in use, landowners can help keep their water supplies safe; remove potential threats to human safety; reduce personal liability; and protect property values. These efforts not only help the area they are living in, but also the surrounding areas for miles and miles away. An estimated 100 million Americans rely on groundwater for their source of drinking water.

Approximately one-third of all public supplies and 95 percent of all rural domestic supplies use groundwater sources.

Working with Self-Help Enterprises and the Community Water Center, the County now is identifying abandoned wells in disadvantaged communities throughout the regional water management area. Once identified, Self-Help Enterprises representatives will contact landowners to secure a "Permissions to Enter" consent, which allows a well-drilling contractor to enter private property to decommission the well. Wells will be properly sealed with concrete to prevent the vertical movement of water. Under this program, there is no cost to landowners for the decommissioning.

If you have an abandoned well and would like to be considered for Tulare County's program, please call Shauna at (559) 802-1647. For Spanish-speaking assistance, please call Juanita at (559) 802-1672.

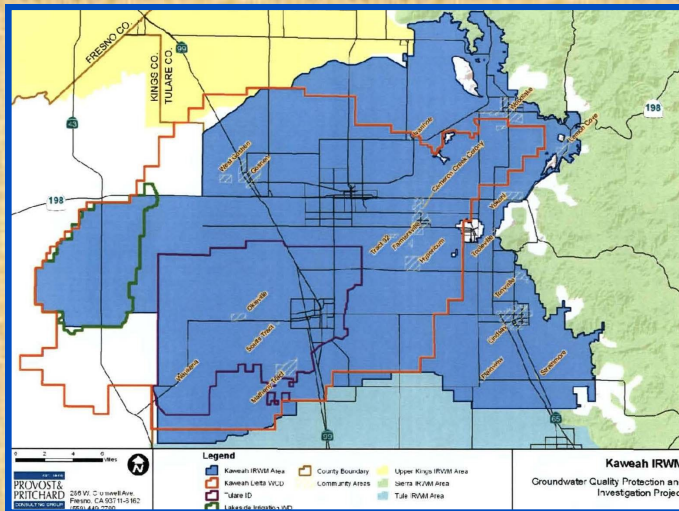
and daily values; and stores the information for users. Weather data is made available over the Internet. Not only do farmers save water using these high-tech systems, they also save energy and money in their farming operations. CIMIS was designed for the agriculture industry; however, turf managers who oversee golf courses, parks and other large turf areas are increasingly using the program. Local water agencies, fire fighters, air control boards, and pest control managers are just a few of the new users.

Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District has it's own weather station and we provide local current weather updates and info to three different sites:

1. Weather Underground @ <http://www.wunderground.com/cgi-bin/findweather/hdfForecast?query=93223>

2. Personal Weather Stations (PWS) @ <http://www.pwsweather.com/obs/KCAFARME2.html>

3. APRS/CWOP Weather @ <http://aprs.fi/weather/a/EW2437>





**Californians Are Saving Water**

A new poll sponsored by the Public Policy Institute of California shows that a record-high number of Californians have reduced their water usage in response to the Golden State's ongoing drought.

With almost all Californians – 92% -- saying they have done a lot or a little to reduce water usage, Central Valley residents – 68% -- are most likely to say they have done a lot, followed by residents in Inland Empire, 58%; Los Angeles, 54%; and San Francisco Bay Area and Orange/San Diego, 53% respectively.

"The percentage of Californians saying that water supply is a big problem in their region has reached a new high," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "Nearly all state residents say that they are doing something to reduce water use as a response to this historic drought."

While there are many ways for urban water users to reduce water usage, people can make the biggest difference by reducing the water that is used outdoors. In most places, more than 50% of a home's water usage is done outdoors.

The following are a few easy ways to change the way you use water on your landscape at your home.

- ⇒ Water early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are cooler. The City of Visalia recommends watering between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. Savings = 25 gallons
- ⇒ Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street. Savings = 12-15 gallons each time you water.
- ⇒ Choose a water-efficient irrigation system, such as drip irrigation, for your trees, shrubs and flowers. Savings= 15 gallons each time you water.
- ⇒ Water deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes.
- ⇒ Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants to reduce evaporation and keep the soil cool. Organic mulch also improves the soil and prevents weeds. Savings = 20-30 gallons each time you water 1,000 square feet.

⇒ Plant drought-resistant trees and plants. Savings = 30-60 gallons each time you water 1,000 square feet.

Keep in mind that water should not be used as an outdoor tool for clean up jobs. Use brooms to clean driveways, sidewalks and patios. Wash cars and boats with a buckets, sponge and hose with self closing nozzles. Both of these activities save between 8 and 18 gallons per minute.

Effective April 17, 2014 the City of Visalia will have watering regulations with a schedule for both Residential & Commercial. Although you may not live in the city limits of Visalia, these are still valuable tips to follow in order to help you with water conservation.

Water after 8:00 p.m. and/or before 10:00 a.m. on your watering day. Water duration is limited to 30 minutes per station per house.



**WATERING SCHEDULE**

***June through September***

- Addresses ending in even numbers water on Wed/Fri/Sun
- Addresses ending in odd numbers water on Tues/Thurs/Sat

***March, April, November & December***

- Even Addresses water on Sun
- Odd Addresses water on Sat

***May & October***

- Even Addresses water on Wed & Sun
- Odd Addresses water on Tues & Sat

***January & February***

- Watering is **NOT** permitted on any day

For more City of Visalia Water Conservation tips and info go to: [http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us/depts/natural\\_resource\\_conservation/water\\_conservation/default.asp](http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us/depts/natural_resource_conservation/water_conservation/default.asp)

**\$11 Billion Water Bond to Improve Water Supplies**

As part of a comprehensive water package first enacted in 2009, the California Legislature approved a water bond now set to appear on the November 2014 ballot. The bond



would provide \$11.4 billion in general obligation bond funds for projects and programs aimed at improving California's water supply reliability and ecosystem health in the Delta.

Unless there are legislative acts to remove the bond, it will remain on the November ballot. The bond would allocate about \$4 billion for local resources development, \$4 billion for ecosystem restoration and \$3 billion for the public benefits associated with new surface and groundwater projects. Every \$1 authorized as part of the bond would

leverage \$3-4 in other funds, for a total of \$40 billion needed for investments.

Several Central Valley legislators have authored water bond bills, including Assembly member Connie Conway and Senator Andy Vidak. Their bills would provide full funding for storage, local resource development and groundwater quality, as well as Delta sustainability.

While California's investment in its statewide water system has not kept pace with its growing population, a water bond could provide the funds necessary to make some large-scale investments in water storage capacity, recycling facilities, levee improvements, flood control facilities, and water treatment plants. Alongside that, ecosystem restoration and habitat improvements also could be achieved.



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VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.KDWCD.COM](http://WWW.KDWCD.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION!

*We here at the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District hope you have found the information in this issue of the KDWCD Water Report helpful. It is our goal to provide water resource information that is relevant and useful to those who live, work and farm in the District. As our District strives to protect and enhance the groundwater resources of the Kaweah River Basin, we also would like the landowners, water users and the general public to be informed and knowledgeable about our water resources, so that together we can make the best use of our water now and into the future.*

**Water/Weather Related Web Links**

- California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) - [www.cimis.water.ca.gov](http://www.cimis.water.ca.gov)      Friant Water Authority (FWA) - [www.friantwater.org](http://www.friantwater.org)
- National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)      United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) - [www.usbr.gov](http://www.usbr.gov)
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) - [www.usace.army.mil](http://www.usace.army.mil)      Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) - [www.acwa.com](http://www.acwa.com)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR) - [www.water.ca.gov](http://www.water.ca.gov)      Water Education Foundation (WEF) - [www.watereducation.org](http://www.watereducation.org)
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) - [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov)      Water Education Foundation—Aquapedia—[www.aquapedia.com](http://www.aquapedia.com)

**Agricultural Water Management Resources**

- CA Agricultural Technology Institute** - A non-profit, educational institution dedicated to improving California agriculture
- Irrigation and Training Research Center** - An irrigation teaching program through outside activities specializing in training, research, and technical support
- National Weather Service** - Provides forecasts and warnings for the central U.S.
- CA Water Institute** - Offers seminars and classes dealing with Regional Water Issues, Irrigation Technology, and Research
- UC Ag Extension** - Includes farm, nutrition, family and consumer science advisors based in more than 50 county offices, reaching millions of farmers, businesses and residents every year
- Center for Irrigation Technology (CIT)** - As an independent research and testing facility, CIT assists designers, manufacturers and users of irrigation equipment to make the technological advances required for our growing and ever changing world. Provides pump efficiency testing
- USDA Farm Service Agency** - Provides contact information as well as a listing of the programs and offices that make up the Farm Service Agency
- USDA/ARS Water Management Research Laboratory** - The development of water and weed management technologies and practices for irrigated agriculture in water deficit areas that use water efficiently, improve agricultural productivity, sustainability and reduce negative environmental impacts
- Farm Advisors Office, Agricultural Commissioners' Offices, Tulare and Kings Counties**