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DEID

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Hopes Remain High For 2002 Water Year

February and March hold keys to marginal verses a plentiful water year.

The promising start of the 2002 water year is beginning to feel a bit shaky these days. And, depending on just how optimistic or pessimistic one wants to be, a review of the current San Joaquin River watershed conditions will give you either great hope, or great heartburn, for the upcoming water year supply.

Bureau Updates Projection

At a gathering of irrigation and water districts in the Friant Division of the Central Valley Project on January 31st in Visalia, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials reported on the current watershed conditions that will lead to the 2002 water supply. Those in attendance were told that the season's to-date precipitation would likely yield at least a 100 percent Class 1 water supply, but no Class 2 water. That amount of water seems to be all but in the bank.

For growers in the Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District, a 100 percent Class 1 supply would yield about 2.0 acre-feet per acre. All in all, that is a pretty good start.

Chances Are We Will Get Better

Given the fact that we have such a good start on the 2002 water supply, there is a

better than even chance that more rainfall will be received. That would translate into a Class 2 water supply, meaning more water for DEID growers. With average precipitation for the balance of the 2002 season, the water supply could reach as much as 60 percent Class 2. For DEID, that would mean plenty of water for District growers, and then some.

But is that a sure thing? Of course not. To illustrate the point, we can look at recent history.

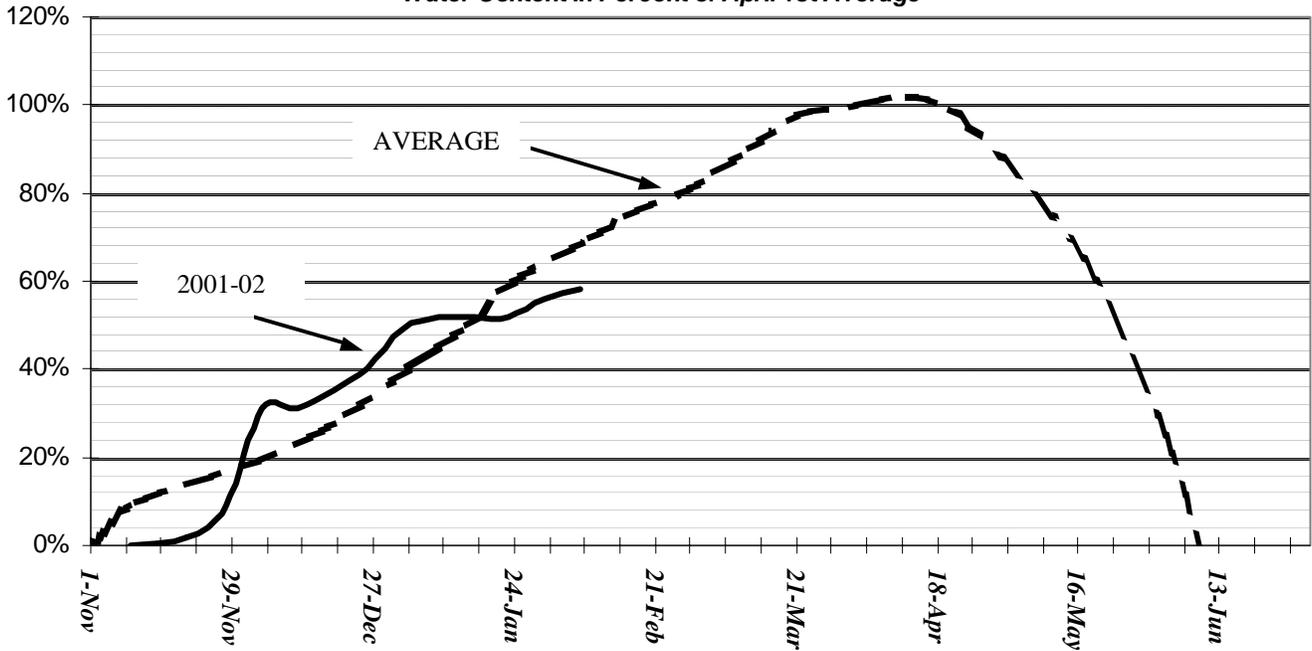
The total precipitation received thus far at the measuring station located at Huntington Lake is 24.8 inches. In 1986, the precipitation total at this same station and time of year was 23 inches, and we ended with bountiful water supply, (100 percent Class 1 and 100 percent Class 2). In 1988 the precipitation total at the Huntington Lake station at this same time of year was 22 inches, but the final result was a very dry year (78 percent Class 1 and 0 Class 2).

Obviously, it is still early enough in the water year that it can go either way. We can only hope that good things continue to happen.



SAN JOAQUIN BASIN

Water Content in Percent of April 1st Average

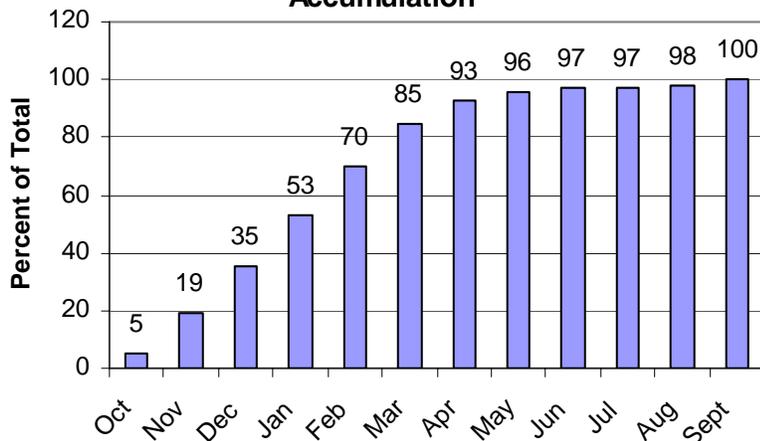


The graph above shows how the current 2001-02 water year is shaping up when compared to the long-term average. The dashed line is indicative of how the San Joaquin River water supply typically develops and accumulates over time in an average year water. The water content of the snow pack is the unit of measurement. The solid line is the current 2001-02 year. Historically, the snow pack peaks on April 1st. Forecasts of the water supply that will result in any given year are made by taking actual measurements of the water content of the snow pack at various points in the watershed and then comparing the actual weighted average to the historical long-term average.

As a general rule of thumb, a snow pack that has 50 percent of the April 1st average will yield a 100 percent Class 1 water supply. With 100 percent of the April 1st average, the water supply will include 100 percent Class 1 and 50 percent Class 2.



Normal Pattern of Annual Rainfall Accumulation



How much of the rainy season is left?

The graph to the left indicates how our rainfall usually accumulates during the precipitation season, which begins in October and ends in September. The months that really count are from December through March, when we typically receive 66 percent of the total rainfall for the entire year.

Despite the drier than normal weather conditions since the beginning of the new year, total rainfall received is not too far from normal for 2001-02.



Deadline Near To Submit 2002 Water Applications- RRA Forms

Growers are reminded that it is time to submit all of the necessary paperwork that goes along with a new water year. That includes a new Water Application and Bureau of Reclamation forms for the 2002 water year, which begins on March 1.

Applications Being Mailed

Following our historic routine, District staff mailed out the 2002 water year packets to all landowners and water users in January. Included in the packet was the 2002 Water Policy, a 2002 Water Application, and directions on how to comply with Bureau informational filing requirements. If you do not yet have a packet and expect to take delivery of District water anytime between March 1, 2002 and February 28, 2003, please contact the District office immediately.

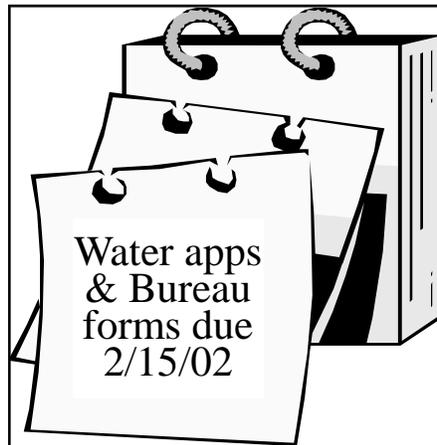
Municipal and Industrial water users are reminded that they too are required to complete a 2002 Water Application in order to receive water after March 1st.

Not All Have To File Bureau Forms

The district included in each packet detailed instructions about forms that are required by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation prior to the District delivering water to a landholding. Based on information already on file with the

District office, Ola Buchanan, our RRA forms specialist, (among her many other duties!) tailored filing instructions to each landowner and water user that received a packet. Each recipient is asked to carefully review the information contained in the packet you received and verify its accuracy before completing and returning all necessary forms to the District office.

Many growers within the District will not have to file any Bureau forms. Those with



less than 240 acres owned, leased, and/or farmed in districts receiving federal project water service are not required to file.

New Filing Requirements For Farm Operators

The Bureau instituted a new filing

requirements in 2001 for farm operators. These new rules are fairly complex and somewhat confusing. Water users should pay particular attention to the information on farm operators that was included in the packets that were mailed out.

No Forms, No water

An important reminder: without a completed 2002 Water Application and all required Bureau forms on file, no water deliveries can be made after March 1, 2002. This is true for all agricultural water users as well as our municipal and industrial water customers.

While the filing of Bureau forms and water applications are necessary, we understand that the process may be a confusing one. District staff are available to assist you, upon your request. If you need help, please do not hesitate to call the District office at (661) 725-2526.



2002 Water Rates Reduced

At its January meeting, the DEID Board of Directors took decisive action to reduce the base water rate to be charged in 2002 by \$2.00 per acre-foot from that which was charged in 2001.

The cost of water delivered to non-full cost lands will be \$31.00 per acre-foot in 2002.

Those growers in areas that require pumping will also be assessed a lift charge. Approximately one-third of the District requires pumping. The 2002 lift rates remain unchanged from 2001.

The new 2002 water rates, including the rates that will apply to full cost acreage, are contained in the 2002 Water Policy that was sent in January to all DEID water

users (see article above). Please be sure to thoroughly review the rules and regulations contained in the Policy for other items of information that will be important to your farming operations and landholdings in the coming water year.



DEID PIPELINE

PROVIDING INFORMATION ON ISSUES OF INTEREST TO WATER USERS AND GROWERS IN THE DELANO-EARLIMART IRRIGATION DISTRICT

DELANO-EARLIMART IRRIGATION DISTRICT
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Water Fact:

The California Energy Commission predicts demand for the state's limited fresh water supplies will be exceeded by 2020.

Water Conservation News

The Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District and its growers have a long history of promoting and implementing sound, economical water conservation principles and practices. In conjunction with that history, the District maintains a water management and conservation plan, as agreed to and incorporated within the terms of the District's renewed water service contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

One of the terms within the District's water conservation plan is the dissemination of timely information on irrigation management consultants and funding sources. Our goal in doing so is to facilitate the implementation and financing of capital improvements for on-farm irrigation systems.

The District office has a list of consultants as well as organizations that may be helpful in obtaining loans, grants, or cost-sharing programs, irrigation pump efficiency testing, and sources of real-time CIMAS ET data.

Please feel free to contact us (661 725-2526) if you have an interest in pursuing any of these sources or programs.



CIMAS Station to be installed at District office

Utilizing a grant from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, (USBR) the Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District will soon install and operate a full CIMAS station at the District's headquarters on Avenue 24 near U.S. Highway 99.

The CIMAS station will collect and provide high-quality, accurate, and reliable irrigation management data, including daily evapotranspiration values, that will be disseminated to DEID growers and others.

The information from the new station will be gathered daily and displayed by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) via its interactive web site. The District is also exploring other opportunities to locally disseminate the CIMAS data to DEID water users. Specific information on accessing this data will be provided to District growers once the station is in and operational.

The station is scheduled to be on-line prior to the 2002 irrigation season.

