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DEID

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More Signs of a Wet 2003

Experts now see more evidence of an El Nino event for 2003.

At first there were just a few saying that 2003 could see significant rainfall. Now, there seems to be a chorus.

Weather forecasters from throughout the industry are seeing signs of another El Nino-type water year in California, albeit a milder one than has been experienced in previous years.

First storm of the year

The first storm of the new water year arrived on November 7th, giving the valley and the San Joaquin River watershed a good drenching. Rainfall totals were extraordinary just about everywhere.

Warmer than most winter storms, snow levels were generally higher than 7,000 feet. Nevertheless, the water year was off to a good start.

Some localized flooding occurred on the Tule, Kaweah, and Kern watersheds. Even our own White River watershed received significant rainfall, but not enough to cause flow to reach the valley floor.

Second storm reaches Central Valley

Just as the first storm brought optimistic hopes for a good water year, the next 30-plus days of dry weather planted the seeds of pessimism. No significant amounts of rain came to the District and the Central Valley until December 16th. The first of what is expected to be a series of winter storms is at hand as of the publication date of this newsletter.

Forecasters are confirming that this series of storms are the result of El Nino conditions that they say are present in the Pacific ocean.

Water Supply to be announced in February

The District will be providing its first water supply announcement in late February to DEID growers. At that time, the initial water supply declaration will be made. The supply will be adjusted as the 2003 water year progresses.

The 2003 water year begins

March 1, 2003.



2002 Water Supply Meets Demands

Despite the 2002 water year being below normal, the District was able to provide its growers with water without the need for a prorate.

Taking a calculated risk, the DEID Board of Directors was able to guide the 2002 water year supply to where all growers were able to receive that amount of water that could be put to beneficial use without having to invoke a supply prorate. In a water year where the District had only slightly over 126,000 acre-feet for approximately 50,000 acres, it is unprecedented.

Water Supply Cobbled Together

DEID has a water service contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for 108,800 acre-feet of Class 1 water and 74,500 of the less dependable Class 2 water. In 2002, the District received 100 percent of its Class 1 supply but only 8 percent (5,960 acre-feet) of its Class 2 supply for a total of 114,760 acre-feet for the water year.

Fortunately, the District had an uncharacteristically high amount of water, 7,636 acre-feet, that was left over from its 2001 water operations and was subsequently carried over into the 2002 water year. Also, an additional 3,706 acre-feet of non-project water was purchased by excess land owners. The sum of all of these various types of water was 126,102 acre-feet.

Land Changes Monitored

What played heavily into the District's decision to go through the 2002 water year without a prorate was the significant amount of acreage that was in transition. Many acres were observed as being in between crops, with the land either left fallow or being replanted, typically going from one variety of permanent crop to another. In either case, it was known that the affected acreage would use significantly less water in 2002 compared to 2001.

Gamble Pays Off

2002 water deliveries started on March 1.

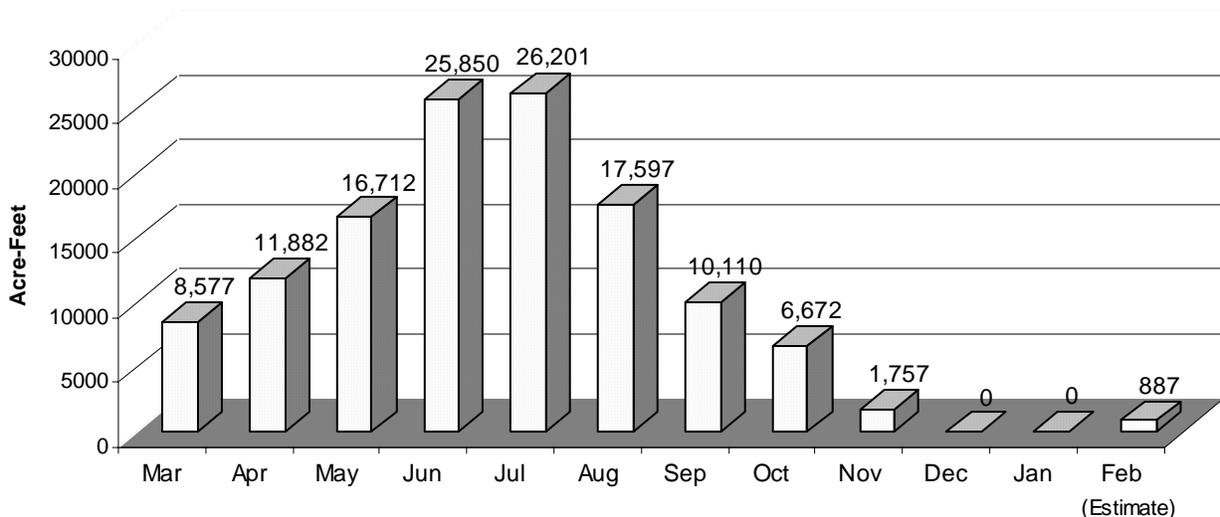
By the time that water deliveries ended in late November (as a result of dewatering the Friant-Kern Canal), the district had 887 acre-feet left of its total 2002 water supply. That water has been scheduled for use in February, the final month of the water year.

Between 1951 and 2001, DEID water users have used an average of 4,500 acre-feet of water in February. However, during the past 10 years, that average February demand had dropped to only 1,500 acre-feet. February demand is greatly dependant on the type of winter that is being experienced in a given year.

The District's water service contract allows the preuse of its 2003 water supply if there is a shortage of 2002 water to meet February water user demands.



Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District 2002 Water Year-Monthly Use



TURNOUT RENOVATION PROJECT ENTERS FINAL CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

The district's turnout renovation project crew began work on the last 35 turnouts in the District to be reconstructed.

Following a summer and fall hiatus, the project crew got back to the job at hand in earnest the week following Thanksgiving. The project will be completed by the end of January. The December-January construction period coincides with the Friant-Kern Canal dewatering period, when water deliveries will be curtailed throughout the District.

The Friant-Kern Canal is dewatered every three to five years for normal maintenance. Completing the turnout renovation project during this same time will eliminate any additional inconvenience to DEID growers as a result of project construction.

The last turnouts are located on the Avenue 56 and Avenue 40 laterals on four separate sublaterals, just west and immediately adjacent to the Friant-Kern Canal.

2003 WATER YEAR FORMS OUT IN JANUARY

DEID landowners and water users should be on the lookout for information and forms for the 2003 water year by mid-January.



All District landowners and water users that expect to receive water from the District during the 2003 water year must complete and return a 2003 water application by March 1, which is the beginning of the new water year. Additionally, those with landholdings over 240 acres in federal water districts westwide must also complete and return certain disclosure forms required by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in accordance with Reclamation law.

All required forms and instructions will be provided to all landowners of record and 2002 water users by mail no later than mid-January. Also to included in that mailing will be a copy of the District's 2003 Water Policy. The Policy is the adopted rules and regulations for water operations in the coming year.

Questions about the Policy or any form may be directed to the District office.

STAYING ON TOP OF LOCAL WEATHER CONDITIONS EASY WITH INTERNET SITES

Weather condition in and around the Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District is easy by connecting on the web and visiting the following sites:

CIMIS STATION AT THE DEID OFFICE: The District and the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) have installed a CIMIS



weather station at the District office. A host of weather-related data are available, including minimum and maximum air temperatures and daily precipitation data. Log on to:

www.cimis.water.ca.gov

WHITE RIVER GAUGING STATIONS: In cooperation with DWR, CalTrans, and others, the District has installed two new river gauging stations in the White River watershed. The new stations compliment an existing station near the town of Ducor.

The new stations are located at Road 208, and near the old town site of White River (above Fountain Springs). All sites can be accessed by logging on to:

www.cdec.ca.gov

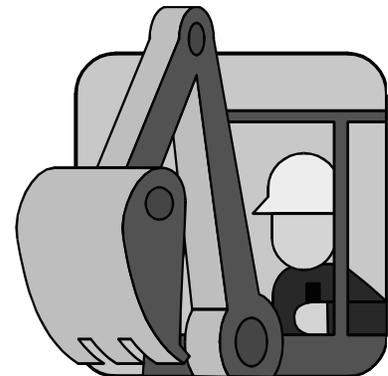


Canal Dewatering Begins within DEID

The Friant Water Users Authority have begun work on that portion of the Friant-Kern Canal that runs through the District.

The picture at the right shows the efforts of the Authority to discharge the remaining water in the Canal. Trailer-mounted pumps have been lowered into the Canal to pump the final amounts of water in the Canal prism.

Work to be conducted includes removal of accumulated silt, and the refurbishment of canal and siphon gates.



DEID PIPELINE

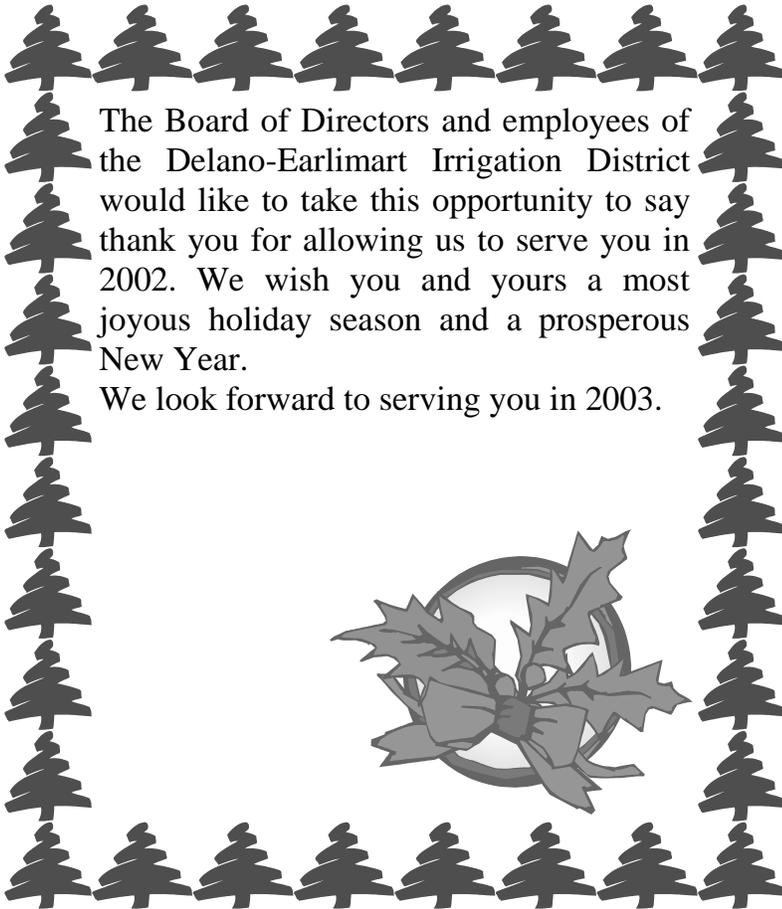
PROVIDING INFORMATION ON ISSUES OF INTEREST TO WATER USERS AND GROWERS IN THE DELANO-EARLIMART IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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The federal Central Valley Project consists of 20 reservoirs and 500 miles of canals. The CVP's Friant Project includes the 520,000 acre-foot Millerton Lake and the 152 mile long Friant-Kern Canal.



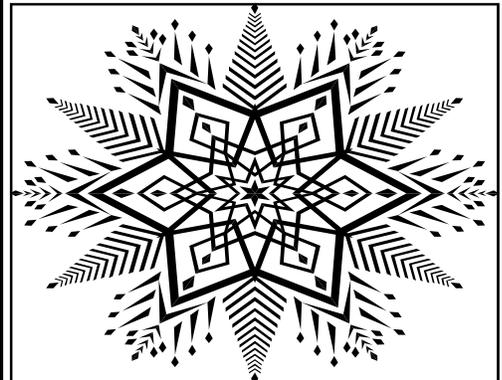
The Board of Directors and employees of the Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for allowing us to serve you in 2002. We wish you and yours a most joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year. We look forward to serving you in 2003.



Holiday Schedule

Here is a reminder of our office hours during the Christmas and New Years holidays.

The District office will be closed from Wednesday, December 25 through Wednesday, January 1. We will resume normal office hours on Thursday, January 2, 2003.



Of course, District personnel are available to respond to any emergency at any time. You can reach us, night or day, at (661) 725-2526.