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**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

2004 Snow data not good news	2
Turnout float assembly provides	3
Turnout renovation	3
Friant-Kern Canal O and M transfers to new	4

## 2004 WATER SUPPLIES ARE ON THE EDGE

The five below-normal years that preceded the 2004 water year were bad enough, but from an operations standpoint, they don't hold a candle to this year.

Typically, water years shape up as clearly being too much or too little water. In 2004, it has become a year of just enough, we hope.

The District has three components to its 2004 water supply: 100 percent of our Class 1 supply (108,800 acre-feet), a meager 5 percent Class 2 supply (3,725 acre-feet), and a small amount of unused water from the 2003 water year (5,869 acre-feet) for a total of 118,394 acre-feet. That should be just enough to get through at least October. However, the uncharacteristically hot spring drove water use through the roof when

compared to historical averages. But, we expect that our late summer and early fall demands will be lower than normal. If we are right, we will have just enough. If demand doesn't drop off, we could end up a bit short.

Getting through October is the goal for 2004. The Bureau of Reclamation and the Friant Water Users Authority plan on dewatering the Friant-Kern Canal in November for winter maintenance. Obviously, we will not be able to deliver water once dewatering occurs anyway, so hanging on until then is our focus.

Regardless of whether grower demand is high or low this fall, there are other factors that can help us that are in play as well. For one, the projected runoff from the San Joaquin River during the critical April through

July period is coming in better than was thought earlier this spring.

Another factor is a negotiated agreement with the Southern California Edison Company that will bring more water down earlier in the year from their upper reservoirs than would normally occur. That bit of help from Edison is very significant and much appreciated.

In an attempt to keep our growers informed about the limited 2004 water supply, notices were sent out in May announcing that the District could run out of water in early October. That brought an understandable reaction from some growers without access to groundwater. The matter was discussed by the District Board of Directors at its June

*(Continued on page 2)*

## DRY YEAR TREND BACKED UP BY SNOW DATA



As reported in our page 1 article, we are suffering from a sixth straight year of below-normal precipitation and snow fall. All of the data received on the San Joaquin River watershed, where the District's water supply originates, backs up the fact that 2004 will be tough.

For instance, the calculated peak natural river flow typically occurs in early June. This year, the peak was experienced on May 4th.

Snow sensors that are

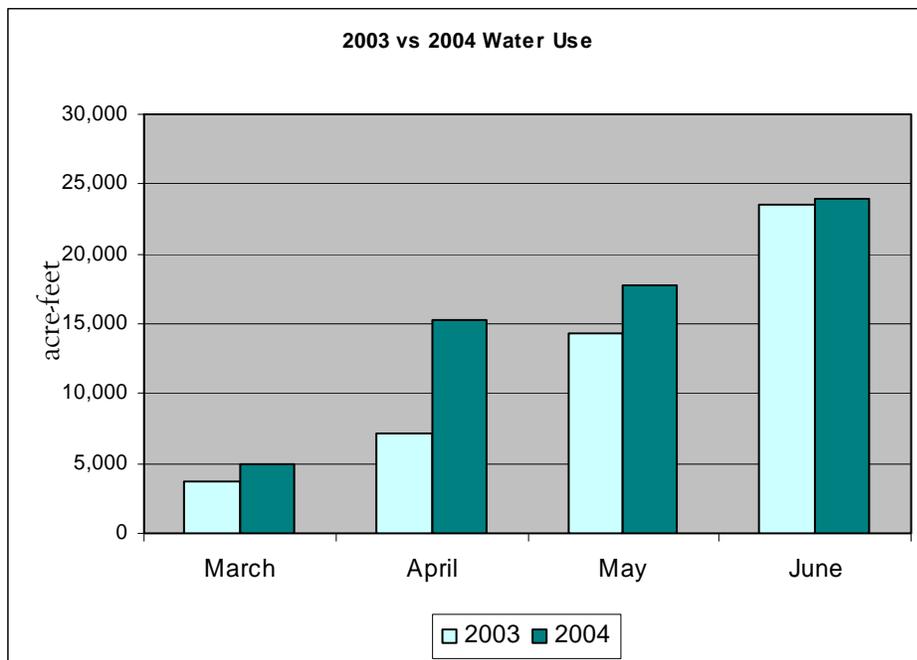
located throughout the watershed at various elevations all told the same story by Memorial Day weekend— no snow anywhere. That is a sobering revelation for a water supply project that relies on a heavy snow pack to provide water for agricultural and municipal use through the long, hot summer.

June 1st data from the California Department of Water Resources predicts the 2004 runoff from the San Joaquin River to be just 59 percent of average. That

percentage started out in March at 93 percent. It dropped with each passing month that was without significant precipitation.

All of this has led to a water supply declaration for the Friant system of only 5 percent Class 2 water. That is a mere 70,000 acre-feet out of a possible 1,400,000 acre-feet.

In addition to the Class 2 water, all of the firmer Class 1 water will be available this year, which totals 800,000 acre-feet.



*(Continued from page 1)*

Board meeting. While the Board determined that the present course of action was the best to pursue, it also directed the District staff to explore other means of adding to the 2004 water supply in order to make it through October.

Growers will be kept advised of the District's water supply situation.

## IS A TURNOUT FLOAT SYSTEM RIGHT FOR YOU?

Growers are being introduced to new technology that will help the Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District reach its goal of providing greater water delivery flexibility to water users without compromising reliability.

Known as a “float assembly” the design provides greater stability in ordered flow rates by automatically compensating for pressure fluctuations within the District’s distribution system.

The float system was designed by the Cal-Poly Irrigation Training and Research Center. The final design has been in the field for 2-plus years, working well in all applications. Float assemblies, along with a separate, water user installed operating valve on the downstream side of the District turnout, are now required for growers to receive permission to operate their own turnout.

The District has installed a full-size working

turnout with a float-assembly that allows a grower to see the full system in action. A viewing platform makes it easy to see how it works and for District staff to answer your questions on the spot. Once you have seen the float assembly demonstrated, you can decide if you will benefit from installation of a float system.

Please call the District office at (661) 725-2526 to schedule a demonstration.



## HISTORY OF THE TURNOUT RENOVATION PROGRAM

In December of 1999, DEID embarked on the largest construction job since the District’s distribution system was first built in the 1950’s. The project involved renovating each of the District’s 625 farm turnouts that serve its water users.

The \$3 million turnout renovation program involved the installation of a new up-and-over design, with most delivery

pipings brought above ground. New valves and meters were installed, all now a standard design. The results were new turnouts that are much more user friendly and accessible to both District staff and growers.

While improved system operation and maintenance features were important aspects of the project, a primary factor of the Board of Direc-

tors in originally approving the project was the goal of creating a delivery system that could be operated on our water user’s irrigation schedule.

The new turnout design, as well as other operational improvements that the District has made, have gotten us closer to that goal. Installation of pressure-compensating float assemblies will be the next step.



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

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*Included in this issue of the DEID Pipeline is the latest edition of the "Irrigation Techline", courtesy of the Friant Water Users Authority. The District periodically provides this and other water conservation and management information as a service to our readers.*

*Please contact us if you would like additional water conservation or*



## **FRIANT-KERN CANAL O AND M MOVES TO NEW AUTHORITY**

Operation and maintenance of the Friant-Kern Canal is now the responsibility of the newly-formed Friant Water Authority (FWA). Transfer of the canal to the FWA from the Friant Water Users Authority (FWUA) took effect July 1. The Delano-Earlimart I.D. is a member of both the FWA and FWUA and supported the transfer.

Directors of the two authorities approved the transfer during special meetings held June 30 in Visalia. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Regional Director Kirk C.

Rodgers approved the transfer documents on behalf of the Interior Department.

The transfer was approved 20-0 by FWA directors and 20-2 by the FWUA board, with the directors from the Madera Irrigation District and the Chowchilla Water District voting no. Neither district takes water service from the Friant-Kern Canal.

All previous FWUA staff members have become employees of the new Friant Water Authority. The FWA has agreed to provide staff

services to the FWUA's remaining activities and interests on a consulting basis.

Twenty out of 22 members of the FWUA compose the new FWA. Both authorities will continue to meet, and for some time have been noticing their meetings jointly. Both are headquartered in Lindsay.

Ronald D. Jacobsma has been appointed as the new FWA General Manager by the FWA board. Jacobsma was the interim General Manager of the FWUA.