

## MEETINGS

### NEXT

August 10, 2007  
DWR's California Water Plan Regional Meeting (EDH Fire Dept.)

### FUTURE:

#### October 5, 2007 (NEW)

Host: Georgetown Divide Public Utility District

December 14, 2007

Host: El Dorado Irrigation District

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## April 13 General Meeting Recap

Karl Winkler, District Chief of the Central District of the Department of Water Resources, was our guest speaker at the April 13<sup>th</sup> general meeting. Mr. Winkler reviewed the process of the California Water Plan Update (Bulletin 160), and described the key parties that are expected to be involved in the process. The MCWRA is particularly interested in this update, because the mountain counties area was identified as an "Overlay Area" in the 2005 California Water plan. The MCWRA wants to maintain this recognition, or change status to a "Hydrologic Region" as appropriate, in the interest of representing its membership in the California Water Plan. Chapter 13 of the 2005 California Water Plan is available on the DWR website [www.waterplan.water.ca.gov](http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov). Click on "Update 2005" and see Volume 3: Regional Reports, Chapter 13: Mountain Counties. The August 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in El Dorado Hills is scheduled for interested parties to provide input into the update. New members present at the April meeting included [Plumas County](#) (welcome back!) and [Sanders & Associates Geotechnical Engineering](#) (welcome to MCWRA!).



MCWRA members at April Meeting



Board members at June Meeting

October General Meeting Date Change— October 5<sup>th</sup> (moved up 1 week) please make a note of it.

## Governor Visits San Luis Reservoir to Promote Water Bond Package

On July 16, 2007, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger visited the San Luis Reservoir to promote his comprehensive plan for a long term water strategy for the State. The Governor emphasized the economic impacts of the last major drought and attributed the San Luis Reservoir's capacity at 25% to the dry winter, suggesting any additional dry years may be disastrous to the agricultural community that forms a large part of the State's economy. The Governor also emphasized that no major storage has been constructed within the last 50 years, all the while the State's population has nearly doubled from 20 million to 37 million, and is projected to grow to 60 million by 2050. The Governor's comprehensive water plan includes \$5.9B in water bonds including \$4.5B for above and below ground water storage, \$1B to fix the Delta, and \$450M for conservation and restoration. A similar bond measure, Senator Cogdill's SB 59, stalled when it did not get approved by committee in April 2007.



Gov. Schwarzenegger held a press conference July 16, 2007 at the San Luis Reservoir to discuss the state's water crisis.

## Mountain Counties Water Resources Association Officers

Bertha Underhill, **Chair**  
Calaveras County Water District

Barbara Balen, **Treasurer**  
Tuolumne Utilities District

Jim Chatigny, **Executive Officer**

Duane Frink, **Vice Chair**  
Foresthill Public Utility District

Hank White, **Director**  
Georgetown Divide Public Utility District

John Frasier, **Director**  
El Dorado Irrigation District

## Current Events

**Tuolumne Utilities District** (by Sheri Barnett, TUD) — Tuolumne Utilities District kicked off its inaugural Strategic Planning process in June, utilizing the professional services of BHI Management Consulting. This process will begin in the fall and is essential in identifying the district's vision, mission, values and will help define short- and long-term goals. Areas of planning will include sessions with the TUD Board, management team, employees, neighboring public agencies and the public to help set those priority goals and strategic direction.

The District owns and operates 14 water treatment plants, 75 treated water storage tanks, two wastewater treatment plants, 56 miles of open ditches, 296 miles of treated water pipeline, 140 miles of sewer pipeline and 26 sewage pump stations. The District serves nearly 2 billion gallons of water to about 13,000 homes and businesses per year. The Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant treats roughly 1.8 million gallons per day.

**Nevada Irrigation District** — Due to the dry year, the Nevada Irrigation District (NID) will not be selling surplus water this year. Their decision applies to purchasers outside the district boundaries. NID usually purchases water from PG&E, but PG&E doesn't have surplus water this year. A large purchaser of water from NID is South Sutter Water District, who will not be able to buy 20,000 acre-feet of water this year. NID expects to have enough water for its customers this year.

**Placer Count Water Agency** — Placer County Water Agency's new Auburn Water Treatment Plant is up and running producing water for its customers. The plant has a current capacity of 8 MGD with the capability of expanding to 14 MGD. The new plant is located on Ferguson Road, across the street from the PCWA office in Auburn.

**El Dorado County Water Agency** — El Dorado County has approved to fund the pursuit for water that is believed to belong to El Dorado County, El Dorado County Water Agency, El Dorado Irrigation District, and Georgetown Divide Public Utility District. The city of Sacramento has the rights to the water now, but when that agreement was made, the contract stated that these districts could take back the rights as the need for water increased. El Dorado Irrigation District would receive an estimated 20,000 acre-feet and Georgetown Divide would receive about 10,000 acre-feet.

**El Dorado Irrigation District** — El Dorado Irrigation District Board of Directors recently awarded professional services agreements to environmental consultants to plan to rehabilitate or stabilize streambeds or channels that may be affected by the Project 184 implementation. Work will focus on the Esmeralda Creek, Oyster Creek, Caples Creek and Caples Dam.

Our intent with *Current Events* is to publicize each Executive Member at least once per year. Feel free to submit your agency's event information to [info@mountaincountieswater.com](mailto:info@mountaincountieswater.com) for publication.

## Final Snow Pack Survey for 2006-2007

The final snow pack survey for the 2006-2007 season was conducted by the California Department of Water Resources in May and the results look meek. California was at 29% of normal snow levels. The low snow levels have sparked many communities to voluntarily promote water conservation for the summer in fear of rationing. Some communities have set lawn watering restrictions between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. while others have encouraged residents to take shorter showers, and find and fix plumbing leaks.

## Restaurants Turn to Tap Water Only

In an article written by Shirley Dang for the *Oakland Tribune*, in an effort to help the environment, some restaurants are not offering their patrons bottled water. In 2002, a fine Italian dining restaurant called Incanto, in San Francisco, "became the first in the country to consciously ban packaged water for conservation reasons." The owner of the restaurant feels it is ridiculous to bottle water when it can come from the tap.

The environmental impacts of packaging and shipping bottled water internationally and domestically is taking a larger toll on the planet everyday as bottled water has become more popular than ever. Plastic bottles, which do not degrade, are overflowing landfills. Although some states offer money per bottle returned to recycling centers (CA offers five cents per bottle), bottles continue to show up everywhere and especially in waterways. Along with the litter issue, the impact of transporting and creating these water bottles consumes many barrels of oil every year. The estimated \$11 billion industry in the United States is estimated to burn up 1.5 million barrels of crude a year. Shipping glass bottles such as San Pellegrino from Italy pollutes the air and oceans.



Although only a few restaurants are currently taking a stand against bottled water (Incanto, NoPa in San Francisco, and Chez Panisse in Berkeley), other restaurants are leaving the environmental decision up to their customers. For now, those who serve tap water are hoping that this anti-bottle endeavor will catch on at other restaurants.

## Water Quality Priorities Changing for Lake Tahoe

The “Keep Tahoe Blue” slogan and priority for water quality in Lake Tahoe may be changing since the Angora fire. “Stream Environment Zones” are in focus, as such zones may have been the arteries of the Angora fire. Stream Environment Zones have been off limits to heavy equipment for purposes of removing or thinning forest or underbrush. The worries of slug loads of sediment, and compression of natural wetlands that filter out silt were part of the basis for the restrictions. Some experts report that Angora Creek became a main artery of the fire because of an abundance of dead trees and a southwest – northeast orientation that paralleled the winds during the fire. The State Water Resources Control Board indicates the desire to find more innovative ways to keep fire hazards to a minimum while protecting the water clarity of Lake Tahoe.



Photo of the Angora Fire—Courtesy of Sheldon Breiner and CBS 13



Photo of the Angora Fire—Courtesy of John Eaton and CBS 13

## American Water Resources Association Starts Northern California Chapter

The AWRA has started a northern California Chapter that will meet in Sacramento on the 4th Tuesday of every month. The first meeting was held Tuesday July 24<sup>th</sup> in Midtown, Sacramento. The topic was “Central Valley Water Law Issues.” The organization has long had a southern California chapter. The AWRA is a non-profit organization with a mission “To advance multidisciplinary water resources education, management and research.” Visit their website at [www.awra.org](http://www.awra.org)

## Governor Declares State of Emergency in 2 California Counties

Due to the little rain received this past winter season, the Governor has declared States of Emergency in Kings County and Riverside County. The primary purpose is to provide some financial assistance to local farmers that depend on rainfall to grow crops. The little rainfall from this past winter has caused crop losses, and therefore the local County Board of Supervisors requested the declaration from the Governor.

Our region is no different – many member agencies are using voluntary water conservation measures to help ease demands on low water supplies. Some agencies are already in their fourth month of voluntary water conservation measures. Some Districts in the state, like the Merced Irrigation District are shortening the irrigation season by one month. The result is farmers will have less or no water available for irrigation from MID for late season crops such as late tomatoes and bell peppers, alfalfa, almond and walnut trees.

## Mountain Counties Website Traffic Surges

In the time between July 2006 and July 2007, the MCWRA website, [www.mountaincountieswater.com](http://www.mountaincountieswater.com) has seen over 9,000 visitors. By far, the most visited page is the home page that provides general information about the MCWRA, and the second most visited page is the meeting announcements. Thanks to all of you who are interested in MCWRA and to those that spread the word about our organization!

## Governor Calls for Immediate Action on Delta

On July 17th the Governor also called for immediate action to be taken to improve conditions in the Sacramento—San Joaquin Delta. In response to this call, some of the DWRs immediate actions will include:

- Prevent the spread of invasive species
- Improve research on the Delta Smelt
- Screen agricultural intakes to protect Delta Smelt
- Restore the North Delta’s natural habitat
- Improve Central Delta water flow patterns
- Improve the ability to respond to Delta emergencies

The actions are not intended to replace recommendations from ongoing Delta planning efforts by the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon task Force. Instead, they are to make incremental improvements until long-term plans are in place. They will be compatible with any long-term Delta plan and will not preclude future restoration options.

## Sewer and Water Treatment Plant Terror Risk

In an article written by Erik Nelson, for the Berryessa Sun, the vulnerability of some sewage treatment and water purification plants for terror attacks is brought to America's attention. Currently, 37 facilities in the U.S. require chlorine gas for their treatment process, three of which are in California (San Jose, Stockton, and Elk Grove). The risk exists in the large rail tank cars that transport the chlorine gas. There is a concern that these rail cars can be used in a chemical terror attack. In the light of the recent foiled terror attack at the JFK airport involving the use jet fuel, the concern for the chemical terror attack becomes more pertinent.

Over 25 million Americans live within a harmful distance from these vulnerable treatment plants. Two alternatives to chlorine gas are ultraviolet light and liquid chlorine bleach. The San Jose plant is expected to be chlorine-gas free in three years. Stockton is considering switching to the ultraviolet light treatment method.

## City of Colfax Fined by the State; New WWTP Forthcoming

As reported in the Colfax Record, by Kelly Arbor, the City of Colfax is being fined \$351,000 by the state for past wastewater treatment plant violations. The fines were originally imposed in August 2003, for waste discharge violations between 1995 and 2000. The City had until December 2006 to update the facility to full compliance - that deadline was not met. The fines were reinstated in late March of 2007. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Department of Health Services state that a number of improvements were not adequately completed, causing an unreliable wastewater treatment. The City has awarded a construction contract for \$7.9M to build a new wastewater treatment plant—construction is expected to begin August 2007. Approval of the plans and some funding was acquired from the State for this project.

## 2007 ACWA Fall Conference

WHEN: November 27-30, 2007

WHERE: Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Hyatt Grand Champions, Indian Wells, CA

PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE: October 26

For more information and to register, please visit [www.acwa.com/events/FC07/FC07\\_index.asp](http://www.acwa.com/events/FC07/FC07_index.asp).

## MCWRA Membership Information

If you are interested in beginning or renewing a membership with Mountain County Water Resources Association, please send the completed form and membership fee to MCWRA P.O. Box 2585, Grass Valley, CA 95945. Membership categories and fees are as follows:

- Executive—\$1000 fee—Open to counties, public agencies, and districts within the Sierra involved with water development, treatment, and /or reclamation of waste water. This category entitles the member to one voting representative
- General — \$250 fee—Open to any public or private district, agency, or organization devoted to production and treatment of water or production of power within this Association's boundaries. Acceptance authorizes participation in activities but is non-voting status.
- Individual—\$100 fee—Open to individuals upon application and dues payment. Acceptance authorizes participation in activities but is non-voting status.

MCWRA meetings are generally held the 2nd Friday of every other month; exceptions may occur from time to time. The Association accepts members interested in our mission to unite agencies, groups, and individuals whose interests include protecting and enhancing mountain county water resources throughout the foreseeable future. Generally, members of our organization are from Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Mariposa, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Tuolumne, and Yuba Counties.

### Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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