



Water News

WESTLANDS WATER DISTRICT

APRIL 2016

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

Federal Allocation of 5% Proves CVP is Broken

With many state reservoirs reaching average capacity and even more rain expected this month, the announcement by the Bureau of Reclamation that CVP contractors would be limited to a 5% allocation represents a complete breakdown in the operation of the Central Valley Project. Even more alarming is the fact that since December 1, 2015, more than 900,000-acre feet of water has been flushed into the ocean based on Bureau's interpretation of federal laws and the biological opinions.

Ironically, the federal government appears to be standing behind a policy that is failing everyone – fish species are getting closer to extinction, farmers are following more land and tapping into depleted groundwater supplies, and Southern California residents are facing continued restrictions and a precarious future. No purpose is being served and no goal is being met, including the protection of the fish.

Calls for reform are not divided along partisan lines. Republicans and Democrats have sent letters to President Obama demanding that more water be pumped for communities served by the CVP. In addition, Senator Feinstein called the allocations "further proof of the need for short- and long-term solutions to get through this drought."

Legislation has been introduced in both houses of Congress to address California's water supply crisis and the failed federal policies. Westlands, the Metropolitan Water District, and other districts are supporting these legislative efforts to provide flexibility in the operation of the CVP and require federal officials to make sensible decisions about water allocations.

We will continue fighting on behalf of the Westlands Water District growers and will pursue meaningful changes to the current laws and policies.

Please contact me with your ideas, comments, or questions at jamaral@westlandswater.org.

Johnny Amaral
Deputy General Manager of External Affairs
Westlands Water District

IN THE NEWS

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION SHOULD INCREASE DELTA WATER EXPORTS

Fresno Bee: The Fresno Bee Editorial Board says the Bureau of Reclamation's decision to pump less water from the Delta than is allowed under the biological opinion is a blow to the region's agriculture-powered economy.

[READ THE FULL EDITORIAL](#)

TREVOR CAREY INTERVIEWS WESTLANDS' JOHNNY AMARAL

Power Talk FM 96.7: Johnny Amaral from Westlands Water District joins The Trevor Carey Show to discuss the recent water allocation.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

OVER 100 WESTERN ORGANIZATIONS CALL ON CONGRESS TO PASS DROUGHT LEGISLATION

Western Growers: A group of Western water users sent a letter to Congress urging bipartisan cooperation to find a legislative solution to the immediate- and long-term impacts of the drought.

[READ THE FULL PRESS RELEASE](#)

RAINFALL, SNOWPACK – AND A PALTRY ALLOCATION TO A POWERFUL WATER DISTRICT

Los Angeles Times: Columnist Robin Abcarian reports on the Bureau's meager 5% allocation to Westlands' farmers.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



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CALENDAR

APR
19

WWD Board Meeting

MAY
17

WWD Board Meeting



We are now on Twitter!

Follow us [@Westlands_Water](https://twitter.com/Westlands_Water)
and join the conversation today.

What's New: Important Notices

North of Delta, Sacramento River Settlement Contractors, San Joaquin Exchange and Settlement Contractors to Receive 100%; Friant to Receive 30% of Class 1 Water; South of Delta 5%

News Release From the Bureau of Reclamation:

The Bureau of Reclamation today announced the initial 2016 water supply allocation for Central Valley Project (CVP) contractors. This allocation is based on a cautious estimate of the amount of water that will be available for delivery to CVP water users and reflects current reservoir storages, precipitation and snowpack in the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) reports that as of March 30, 2016, the statewide average snow water equivalent in the Sierra Nevada is 24.4 inches, as compared to two inches on this date last year, and rainfall is currently at 125 percent of the historical average. However, in 2015 California experienced its fourth year of drought, and although conditions have greatly improved, Gov. Jerry Brown's Emergency Drought Proclamation, issued January 17, 2014, remains in effect.

"While we are on track for near-average precipitation season this year, the ongoing and residual impacts of the multi-year drought continue. The impacts this summer will be greatest on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley and some areas served by New Melones Reservoir," said Reclamation Mid-Pacific Regional Director David Murillo.

Reclamation determines the allocation of CVP water for agricultural, environmental, and municipal and industrial (M&I) purposes based upon many factors including hydrologic conditions, reservoir storage levels, water quality requirements, relative priority of water rights, contractual obligations, and endangered species protection measures.

This initial CVP allocation is also based on conservative assumptions regarding Delta operations over the next couple of months; however, should conditions improve, CVP supplies could also improve, with increased supplies to Reclamation contractors in the hard-hit San Joaquin Valley. Reclamation will continue working with the DWR, federal and state fishery agencies, our contractors, and others to effectively carry out project operations and improve water supply consistent with all applicable laws.

North-of-Delta Contractors

- Agricultural water service contractors North-of-Delta are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.
- M&I water service contractors North-of-Delta are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.
- Sacramento River Settlement Contractors are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.

In-Delta

- The Contra Costa Water District, which receives water directly from the Delta, is allocated 100 percent of its contract supply.

Continued on page 5

Report from D.C. and Sacramento



WASHINGTON D.C.

H.R. 4366 (Valadao CA-21) - Authorizes a settlement to a long-standing dispute between the United States and the Westlands Water District. According to Congressman Valadao, HR 4366 is necessary to approve and authorize the settlement and has the potential to save taxpayers billions of dollars.

[READ MORE.](#)

S. 2533 (Feinstein CA) - Creates the California Long-Term Provisions for Water Supply and Short-Term Provisions for Emergency Drought Relief Act. This legislation provides both long- and short-term solutions to California's water supply crisis. [READ MORE.](#)

Garamendi Legislation - Congressman Garamendi announced his intention to introduce legislation to address California's water crisis. According to Garamendi, the legislation will mirror S. 2533 by Senator Feinstein.

New Effort to Expedite Relief to Farmers and Southern California Communities - House Leader McCarthy and Members of the GOP California Delegation are leading an effort to include language in the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2017. The language is designed to take advantage of the

increased water supply and deliver water to California's Central Valley and southern Californian communities while protecting existing water rights.

House Leader McCarthy and his colleagues stressed the need for immediate action by the Senate to take advantage of the recent rains and increased snowpack. The GOP delegation criticized the Bureau of Reclamation for pumping less water this year than last year when the rainfall and snowpack were at much lower levels.

SACRAMENTO

SB 1317 (Wolk): Bill passed as is and re-referred to Senate Committee on Governance and Finance. Hearing schedule for April 20, 2016. [READ MORE.](#)

AB 1713 (Eggman): Scheduled for hearing on April 19, 2016 in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee. [READ MORE.](#)

AB 2304 (Levine): Bill passed as is and re-referred to Assembly Committee on Appropriations. [READ MORE.](#)

San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy and Jobs Act

Westlands and the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority are sponsoring legislation to promote renewable energy projects, create jobs in the energy sector, and make use of lands that have been retired. Assemblymember Rudy Salas introduced Assembly Bill 2630, also known as the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy and Jobs Act, on February 19, 2016. The bill requires the Public Utilities Commission, as well as the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, to evaluate potential renewable energy projects on least-conflict lands in the San Joaquin Valley. Prioritization of the project evaluations is based on the following criteria: first, projects that reuse drainage-impaired agricultural land, and are considered both economically viable as well as environmentally beneficial; second, projects that retire drainage-impaired agricultural land, and facilitate regional agricultural drainage solutions; and third, projects that facilitate the redirection of surface water supply from drainage-impaired agricultural lands to other productive agricultural land.

Additionally, the bill requires both commissions to use the results of the evaluation to recommend to the Independent System Operator an amount of renewable energy production in the San Joaquin Valley that reasonably maximizes the use of least-conflict lands as identified by the San Joaquin Valley Solar Convening, consistent with the state's overall need for renewable energy. The recommendations must be conducted by January 31, 2017.

WESTLANDS SCHOLARSHIPS

Westlands Water District awards six scholarships annually to college-bound seniors from local Westside high schools in Coalinga, Firebaugh, Lemoore, Mendota, Riverdale and Tranquillity. The winners are selected through an application process, which includes an essay. Each winner receives \$1,000 paid in their name to the college of their choice.

The deadline to apply is Friday, May 13, 2016. Application materials are available at the six following high schools: Coalinga High School, Firebaugh High School, Lemoore High School, Mendota High School, Riverdale High School, and Tranquillity High School.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS 6TH ANNUAL WESTSIDE FUNDRAISER AT HARRIS RANCH

Funds raised will be used exclusively to support our Huron and Firebaugh Clubs!

We invite you to invest in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Huron and Firebaugh by supporting this fundraising event on Thursday, May 26th, 11:30 am at Harris Ranch Restaurant-Garden Ballroom. The Boys & Girls Clubs have been serving youth ages 6-18 in Fresno County for more than 65 years. Since its first club opened in West Fresno in 1949, they have expanded across Fresno and Clovis, and into communities including Firebaugh and Huron. The Boys & Girls Clubs mission is to enable all young people to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens.

This local organization has been in Huron and Firebaugh for over 25 years. Our regional Huron and Firebaugh Clubs together have more than 400 members, ages 6-18. The Clubs are open every day after school from 2:00pm - 8:00pm when kids need a safe and positive place to go.

How Can You Support This Event?

Become a sponsor or auction donor! Buy individual tickets for \$250 each or a table of 8 for \$2,500. You can also donate an auction item. [LEARN MORE.](#)

For additional questions and more information please contact Sandra Dee Chaney at (559) 266-3117 or schaney@bgclubfc.org.

WESTLANDS TOURS

Tour season is upon us. If you know of a group that would benefit from a tour of Westlands Water District and our Westside operations and farming efficiencies, please contact our public affairs department at (559) 241-6233. Below are a few photos from a recent tour with the Fresno County Farm Bureau's FAACT leaders. These photos are of newly planted processing tomatoes, a garlic field, and tour participants standing near a lettuce field ready for harvest.



ANNUAL WATER USERS' WORKSHOP

Our annual water users' workshop was held on Tuesday, March 15th. Important topics of interest were covered by Westlands staff including water supply outlook, 2016-2017 Adopted Budget, Groundwater Conditions, Sustainable Groundwater Management Program and other matters of interest. Following was a question and answer session for the 150+ attendees held at our Five Points Field Office. Below are a few photos from the workshop.



IMPORTANT NOTICES: BOR Allocation Announcement

Continued from page 2

South-of-Delta Contractors

- Agricultural water service contractors South-of-Delta are allocated 5 percent of their contract supply.
- M&I water service contractors South-of-Delta are allocated 55 percent of their historic use.
- San Joaquin River Exchange and Settlement Contractors are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.

Wildlife Refuges

- Wildlife refuges (Level 2) North- and South-of-Delta are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.

Friant Division Contractors

- Pursuant to Reclamation's March 18 notification to Friant Division contractors and based upon Millerton Lake storage and current and forecasted hydrologic conditions in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin, the Friant Division allocation is 30 percent of Class 1 supplies.
- In addition, an Uncontrolled Season supply of 100,000 acre-feet and Unreleased Restoration Flow supply related to the San Joaquin River Restoration Program of 85,000 acre-feet are being made available as blocks that need to be scheduled and delivered by May 1 and May 15 respectively to avert flood management concerns.

Eastside Water Service Contractors

- Eastside water service contractors (Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District and Stockton East Water District) will receive 0 percent of their contract supply due to a lack of available CVP supplies from New Melones Reservoir.

In 2015, Reclamation undertook extraordinary actions to provide public health and safety supplies to our M&I contractors, meet our obligations to the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors and South-of-Delta refuges, and facilitate water transfer and water sharing agreements throughout the Central Valley.

The CVP began the water year last October with only 47 percent of average storage overall and just 27 percent of average storage in the Federal share of San Luis Reservoir. This compares to 85 percent of average overall for the CVP and 53 percent of average storage in the Federal share of San Luis Reservoir today. Dry conditions in the fall of 2015 also hampered the filling of San Luis Reservoir. Further, throughout the fall and most of the winter, Reclamation held releases to minimal levels to conserve storage in upstream reservoirs.

The combined effect of four years of drought, lack of available water at the beginning of the 2016 water year, and restrictions to protect listed species are impacting the amount of water that can be allocated to South-of-Delta agricultural water service contractors. As the water year progresses, changes in hydrology and opportunities to deliver additional water will influence future allocations. Water supply updates will be made as appropriate and posted at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvp-water/index.html>.

Reclamation is the largest wholesale water supplier and the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the United States, with operations and facilities in the 17 western states. Its facilities also provide substantial flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. Visit our website at <http://www.usbr.gov>.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Fresno County Farm and Nutrition Day

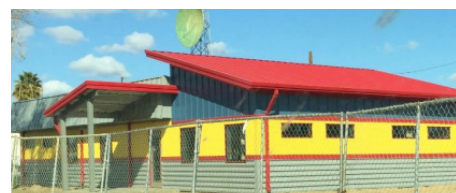
On Friday, March 18th we had the opportunity to reach more than 3,500 third grade students, teachers and chaperones who participated in the annual Fresno County Farm and Nutrition Day. Westlands hosted a booth where students learned about water sheds, the amount of land available for farming, and some of the top crops grown in Westlands Water District. Below are a few photos from the day's events.



COMING SOON

A New Boys & Girls Club is Coming to Huron in 2016!

We are proud a Westside Farmer is spearheading the construction of a new building to accommodate the Huron Boys & Girls Club. The new Club is nearing completion (pictured below). It will provide new program space, and more opportunities for additional youth to become Club members!



California's absurd water policy must change

William Bourdeau
SF Chronicle | April 1, 2016

Imagine a state water policy that mandates all residents of Los Angeles must turn on their taps and let water run for three straight months but denies water to every San Franciscan during the same period.

Crazy, right? Yet this is remarkably similar to California's water supply policy, a hodgepodge of discordant federal and state programs.

Case in point: After five long years of drought, we finally have some relief. In response, the state Department of Water Resources increased its water delivery estimate to a 45 percent allocation for State Water Contractors, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced an initial 30 percent allocation for farmers on the east side of the southern San Joaquin Valley.

But on the west side of the valley, water contractors are being warned to expect a zero allocation.

Our unbalanced and uncoordinated water policy creates some winners and multiple losers. The California congressional delegation and our Legislature — indeed, every Californian — should demand to know why, now that we have water, it is not being pumped where it's needed.

Here's the nonsensical answer. Since Dec. 1, 2015, more than 779,000 acre feet, or more than 200 billion gallons, of water has been flushed into the ocean. That's enough water for almost 1.5 million families for an entire year — and this is only water we could have pumped, not all the water flowing to the ocean.

Letting water flow to sea is required under federal biological opinions designed to protect native fish species such as the endangered delta smelt; water pumping to the San Joaquin Valley is restricted to support the smelt, the legal indicator of the delta's environmental health. But even these efforts have failed. Since 2008, government regulators have flushed almost 2 trillion gallons of water into the San Francisco Bay, yet biological sampling in the delta consistently yields fewer than a dozen smelt, with virtually none found sucked into the pipes that pump water to the San Joaquin Valley.

Theories abound for their continued decline — inadequate rainfall, warmer water, predation — but no new policies are being advanced to revisit the pumping restrictions. In the meantime, our water policy demands that we continue to carelessly direct water out to sea.

Last month, Sen. Dianne Feinstein sent a letter requesting that President Obama order federal agencies to “maximize pumping in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to the maximum level allowed under the Endangered Species Act and the biological opinions.” Feinstein observed that the agencies “operate the system in a manner that may be contrary to the available data,” and to the detriment of the 69 communities in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

Like all farmers, I'm aware that the long-term survival of food production capability depends on the effective management of California's water resources, so we prioritize good water stewardship and management; irrigation efficiencies; a proactive approach to groundwater management; and environmental stewardship. But we are stymied by the dysfunctional federal Central Valley Project. California's overall approach to water management must contain enough flexibility so that in times of “water wealth,” we receive an allocation that considers our important role in food production.

After the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, our state came together under extraordinary measures to address the emergency. Similarly, in these years of drought, we all worked to preserve precious water. Now, it's a wet year, and the reality for many Californians remains dire. Do we have the same determination — the same political grit — to fix to our broken water delivery system?

William Bourdeau is the executive vice president of Harris Farms in Coalinga (Fresno County), which grows lettuce, tomatoes, onions, melons, almonds, pistachios and grapes.