

EID Reports



Summary of the February 9, 2009 EID Board Meeting

El Dorado Irrigation District — serving people, agriculture, businesses, and the environment in El Dorado County since 1925

For immediate release: February 10, 2009

Board hears dry-year update **Staff report for the state's climate action registry completed**

Placerville, CA . . . In anticipation of another dry year, El Dorado Irrigation District (District) staff reported on the District's current water conditions at the February 9 Board meeting. "We're not yet at the point where conditions would trigger action under our drought preparedness plan," said David Witter, director of the District's natural resources department. "But precipitation levels to date indicate another dry year is likely. We'll keep a close eye on conditions over the next few weeks. If things don't improve appreciably, we may come to the Board with a recommendation to move into phase one of our drought plan at the Board's March 9 meeting."

If the District were to declare a stage one drought, customers would be asked to voluntarily cut their water use to achieve a District-wide reduction of 15 percent.

Witter also said the governor may declare a statewide drought emergency that could mandate actions for all water districts, and "if that occurs, we hope there is leeway for us to enact measures in keeping with our drought preparedness plan and in the best interests of our customers."

Witter reported that Jenkinson Lake—the largest single source of water for EID customers—is currently at about 64 percent of capacity, which is below the average over the past 53 years for this time of year. The lake is located in Sly Park Recreation Area in Pollock Pines.

"We are also talking with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation about water in Folsom Reservoir that we have rights to," he added. "Last year, the Bureau cut back on the amount of water we could draw under that long-term contract, and we expect the same may happen this year. We are trying to supplement any cutback with a temporary contract for water that we have historic rights to in addition to the water under the long-term contract."

Forward-looking stance on meeting climate action goals saves energy and money

In mid-2007, EID joined the state's climate action registry, and at the February 9 Board meeting the District's watershed coordinator, Elizabeth Betancourt, presented the results of the first report on EID's actions. The report documents that the District is reducing its overall carbon footprint—thus saving money on electricity and fuel—through initiatives such as the solar photovoltaic facility at El Dorado Hills wastewater treatment plant, the acquisition of hybrid vehicles as part of the District's fleet, and improvements to the fleet's diesel-powered vehicles.

"We joined the registry on a voluntary basis because we anticipate that participation will soon be mandatory for water agencies," said Liz Mansfield, manager of the District's watershed and water policy programs. "We wanted to be in a position to have some influence over the direction of any mandates, and we also wanted to establish a baseline that would allow us to take credit for the energy-efficient programs we have already established. Overall, our actions should help us to acquire grants and cut our costs if future mandates require additional work to cut emissions."

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“The cost of this program to the District has been minimal,” Mansfield explained. “Rather than hiring an outside consultant, as many members of the registry do, our staff collected the data and prepared the report. We are required to verify the data through an impartial outside source, but the contract for that work over three years is less than \$20,000.”

Next steps include back reporting for 2005 and 2006, keeping track of state and federal climate-related legislation, continuing to minimize the District’s emissions, and collecting data for 2008 emissions.

In other business—

The Board’s Insurance and Personnel Standing Committee heard from EID human resources staff and Shellie Anderson of Bryce Consulting (Sacramento) about the compensation study that the District is poised to begin. The presentation covered the goals of the study, the agencies that will be used to determine job market conditions, and the process that will be followed in conducting the study.

The compensation study, along with a job classification assessment that Bryce Consulting is now completing, is required under terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the EID Employees’ Association and the District. The memorandum guides District relations with its represented employees.

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