

EID Reports



Summary of the April 26, 2010 EID Board Meeting

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

For immediate release: April 26, 2010

EID and Forest Service Finalize Land Exchange: Cost Savings, Management Efficiencies are the Result

- **Board Adopts Resolution to Roll Back Retirement Benefits for New Employees**
- **Local Firm Awarded Contract for Temporary Employment Services**

Placerville, CA... Capping four and a half years of work, the El Dorado Irrigation District board of directors today authorized a land exchange agreement with the U.S. Forest Service.

EID will receive \$295,000 at the close of escrow, a sum that equalizes the land value in the exchange. The district will also realize savings of \$14,000 a year in decreased fees for special-use permits that will no longer be needed as a result of the exchange.

Jim Hilton, EID's real estate program administrator, said the district will receive seven federal land parcels totaling just over 206 acres. "It's a win-win for both parties and the public," Hilton said, "particularly because management inefficiencies will be reduced significantly as a result of the exchange. As one example, the district will now own the land where our Reservoir A is located. We will no longer have to pay special-use permit fees to operate this facility—our largest water treatment plant.

"In another example, land under EID's Silver Lake West campground is now federal, while EID owns land under the Silver Lake East campground, which the Forest Service operates. With the exchange, that odd situation is resolved. We will own the land under our campground, and the land under the Forest Service campground will go into federal ownership."

The district will also pay less in property taxes, by an estimated \$23,000 a year, to Amador and Alpine counties where other lands involved in the exchange are located.



Pleased with the outcome of the lengthy land exchange process are (l to r) EID Board Director George Wheeldon, USFS District Ranger Doug Barber (Amador Ranger District), EID environmental manager Dan Corcoran, USFS District Ranger Duane Nelson (Placerville Ranger District), EID real estate program administrator Jim Hilton, EID Board Director Bill George, USFS Resource Officer Cindy Oswald, EID Board President John Fraser, EID Board Director George Osborne, and EID Board Vice President Harry Norris.

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The land exchange agreement is the result of a requirement in EID's license to operate its El Dorado hydroelectric power generation system, also known as Project 184, which delivers water both to generate power and for EID customers. "The license directs the district to develop a proposal with the Forest Service that addresses possible land exchanges or other actions to improve land management," Hilton said. "With this agreement, we've done that."

After completing the required National Environmental Policy Act review, the Forest Service found no significant environmental effects would be caused by the exchange, reported EID environmental manager Dan Corcoran. "In situations like this, a California agency such as EID can use federal environmental documents to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act if the federal document complies with the provisions of the CEQA Guidelines and the California agency determines the federal process gave sufficient public notice," he said. "We found that the Forest Service document satisfactorily addresses the requirements of CEQA, and the public noticing exceeded the state standards."

Pension Benefits for New Employees Rolled Back

The board approved a resolution that will roll back pension benefits for any new employee hired after May 8 of this year. The action affirms two items negotiated in the memorandum of understanding that the district completed with its employees' association in late March.

First, new employees with at least 5 years of employment at the district may retire at 55 years of age. For each year worked, they will receive 2 percent of the average, typically, of their final 3 years of salary. This changes the pension formula to what was in place at the district before 2005. Current EID retirees will see no changes in pension benefits.

Second, stricter requirements apply to retiree medical benefits for new employees. After 10 years (5 have to be at EID), new employees will be eligible for just 50 percent of the retiree medical benefit. That figure will increase 5 percent per year after the 10 years, reaching 100 percent only after 20 years of service. Current employees are eligible for 100 percent of the medical benefit when they retire so long as they have 5 years of service.

Board Awards Contract to Placerville's Blue Ribbon Personnel Services

Agreeing with the need for temporary employees, especially during late spring, all summer, and early fall at Sly Park Recreation Area, the board approved a one-year contract with Blue Ribbon Personnel Services in Placerville for up to \$320,000. The action also authorized EID's general manager to renew the contract over each of the next two years if Blue Ribbon's hourly mark-up rate remains the same.

"The \$320,000 contract we propose today represents another decrease in our temporary employment costs," said Vicki Hoffman, EID's senior human resources analyst. "Those costs are now down from more than \$753,000 in 2008, which is when we began a series of cost-cutting measures to reduce the operating budget.

"We sought proposals from around the area, and Blue Ribbon came in with the most cost-efficient responsive bid. We're pleased to recommend a contract with this local firm."

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