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“Our customers should get an ‘A’ for their efforts,” said General Manager Jim Abercrombie. “But we’re not out of the woods yet. We want to err on the side of caution and encourage EID customers to continue to aim for a 30 percent reduction in water use.”

EID is still under a Stage 2 Water Warning which also includes restrictions in outside watering. From November 16 through April 15, 2015, outside irrigation is limited to the first seven days of every month and February for consumptive use. Since EID has an integrated water supply, the District has diverted approximately 1,000-1,200 acre-feet of water from Jenkinson Lake via the El Dorado canal until March 2015. In terms of water supply, the District must pump water from Jenkinson Lake via gravity from our eastern supply sources.

The Esmeralda tunnel is a segment of the Project 184 El Dorado canal and flume system, located east of Pacific House. The 1,500-foot tunnel was constructed in 1930 to transport water from the upstream portal and completely choked off flow to the tunnel. The failed portion of the tunnel. At left, workers build a temporary bypass to access the failed portion of the tunnel. Right: The failed portion of the tunnel is in an area that consisted of wooden lagging timber lining used to provide structural support. The tunnel is 7.5 feet high and varies in width from 7 to 9 feet at the bottom and 5 to 7 feet at the top.

**Drought Update and Looking Ahead**

As this edition of the Waterfront goes to press, we have experienced some excellent precipitation. According to state reports, recent storms have brought Northern Sierra precipitation above 12.8 inches as of December 8. This represents 110% of normal of year-to-date precipitation in this region.

However, since much of the state’s annual rain and snow falls later in the winter, it is still too early to draw conclusions on the impact of this winter’s rain and snow on the current drought. Recent and upcoming storms will likely improve water conditions, but this precipitation is a small step in the right direction in the context of the state’s multi-year drought.
Looking Back
October 5, 2015, marks EID’s 90th anniversary. Through the years EID has grown in mission and complexity. Over the year, we’ll revisit some of the history of EID.

The following is excerpted from the EID history brochure located on our website.

The Early Days—Setting the Stage for EID
Water has been and continues to be an undeniable force in shaping the economic, ecological, and cultural face of El Dorado County. And El Dorado Irrigation District has been at the forefront of providing essential water services in the county since 1925.

The District’s history is closely intertwined with early development of water resources, tracing back to California’s historic gold rush days. When James W. Marshall picked up that first nugget at Coloma in January 1848, he triggered a human migration with few equals. “Gold!” was heard around the world, and tens of thousands headed for the Mother Lode.

Water was essential to successful mining—and to agriculture, which grew side by side with the mines. The development of hydropower production in the early 1900s brought a new competitor for water onto the scene. Water rights became more precious than gold-hard-scrubbed from unforigu ing ground and stubborn mountain sides.

So it remains today.

The First 30 Years—Securing a Reliable Water Supply
In 1925, some 77 years after Marshall’s discovery of gold and in the face of growing competition for water from hydropower producers, El Dorado County residents voted to form El Dorado Irrigation District. The reasons? To protect water filings, ensure a secure water supply, keep irrigation rates reasonable, and increase the value of agricultural lands.

The emphasis on agriculture was understandable. By 1920, thousands of acres were in crop production, fed mostly by old mining ditches that relied on uncertain precipitation patterns and little storage. Indeed, adequate water for agricultural irrigation and domestic needs was the focus of the EID Board of Directors’ first meeting: “The question arose as to the water shortage for the coming irrigation season, and it was the consensus that every effort be made to bring about immediate relief.”

Two years later, the District purchased the water storage and distribution system of the financially troubled El Dorado Water Corporation. Facilities and infrastructure consisted of nearly 70 miles of main laterals and ditches as well as Weber Reservoir, which the corporation completed in 1924.

For the next few decades, EID sought new water supplies. Faced with the Great Depression and other woes, finances were tight. But demand for water continued to rise, spurred by more land in agricultural production and a growing population. By the 1950s, there were nearly as many people in El Dorado County as there were during the apex of the 1850s–1860s mining days.

The culmination of a long-held dream came with completion of the Sly Park reservoir, now known as Jenkinson Lake, in the mid-1950s. Built by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as part of California’s Central Valley Project, the reservoir and surrounding recreation lands were officially transferred into EID ownership in late 2003.
The year 2015 marks a major milestone for the District, as this is the 90th year that the District has been in business. On October 5, 1925, the District was formed by county residents with the purpose of providing water for farming. In those days, water was also essential to gold mining as well. Water rights became more precious than the gold that was mined from the local mountainsides and streams. Not much has changed in these ninety years. Water rights are still a hot topic, especially contentious during the drought we’ve endured these past three years.

“The famous words attributed to Mark Twain ‘whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting’ have never been truer!” said El Dorado Irrigation District General Manager Jim Abercrombie. The famous words attributed to Mark Twain “whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting” have never been truer! And, water is still essential to our agricultural community, as agriculture remains one of the top revenue-generators in the County. Apple Hill’s regional draw provides the public with a rich tourism experience and is second to none.

Over the next year we will be featuring various articles in the Waterfront and on our website about EID’s early days, so stay tuned to learn more about our beginnings and how they relate to what’s happening at the District in more modern times.

I am also happy to report that the Board recently approved a two-year operating budget, which, in the off years, is adjusted and reapproved to meet changes in the District’s financial situation for the upcoming year. Included within the budget is a five-year capital improvement plan (CIP). A long-term financing plan is used to balance the ongoing operational financing needs with the capital needed to fund the ongoing CIP while providing safe and reliable services to our customers.

At the beginning of this two-year cycle, the economy within the District’s service area appears to be slowly recovering. As this is the beginning of the District’s two-year operating budget cycle. The Board adopts a two-year budget and conducts a mid-cycle review to determine any changes that may be needed in the second year of the cycle. “At the beginning of this two-year cycle, the economy within the District’s service area appears to be slowly recovering,” said EID General Manager Jim Abercrombie. “Therefore, no rate increases are needed for 2015.”

The purpose of the District’s 2015-2019 Financial Plan is to establish the forecast revenues needed to recover the cost of funding the operations and maintenance, capital expenditure, and debt expenses required to meet the District’s mission of providing high quality water, wastewater treatment, recycled water, hydroelectric power, and recreational services in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner, meeting the District’s debt covenant requirement to its bond holders.

The Board annually adopts an ongoing five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the District as well as a two-year budget which, in the off years, is adjusted and reapproved to meet changes in the District’s financial situation for the upcoming year. “The long-term financing plan was approved and the ongoing operational financing needs and the capital required to fund the ongoing CIP to provide safe and reliable services,” said Abercrombie.

Two-Year Budget Approved, No Rate Increases in 2015

At its December 10 meeting, the EID Board of Directors unanimously adopted a two-year operating budget in the amount of $45.482 million for 2015 and $46.310 million for 2016, as well as the 2015-2019 Financial Plan using forecasted 0.5, 5, 4, 5, 4, 3 percent annual rate increases for the water and recycled water utilities and 0.5, 0.5, 4, 3 percent annual rate increases for the wastewater utility. All proposed future rate increases after 2015 will be revisited during the annual budget review cycle.

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Two major eras of ditch and canal building occurred in El Dorado County. The first (1852–1858) provided water for sluicing and hydraulic mining once the easy gold diggings in streams paid out. The second phase (1867–1880) helped for a short time to revive gold mining as one response to the nationwide depression of 1873. Agriculture and towns also benefited from the canals.

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 Moreno PM (2015) "The gold of EID". El Dorado Irrigation District, El Dorado County, California. Project, the reservoir and surrounding recreation lands were officially transferred into EID ownership in late 2003.
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EID is still under a Stage 2 Water Warning which also includes restrictions in outside watering. From November 16 through April 15, 2015, outside irrigation is limited to just one day per week (a Saturday or Sunday, depending on address). Details of the watering restrictions can be found at www.eid.org/WateringRestrictions.

To keep informed about the drought and its impact at EID and beyond, go to www.eid.org/drought. Keep connected on Facebook by ‘liking’ the EID Drought Information page. We’ll keep you updated on customer conservation data and much more.

### 2015 REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS

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Board meetings generally occur on the second and fourth Monday of each month. The dates marked (T) take place on a Tuesday. The November 23 date is tentative.

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**Esmeralda Tunnel Repairs Proceed**

On September 21, 2014, a portion of the Esmeralda tunnel collapsed, completely blocking the tunnel with earth and debris. On October 14, 2014, the Board declared an emergency for repair of the tunnel and awarded a contract to Mining Construction, Inc. MCI began mobilizing the following week.

The Esmeralda tunnel is a segment of the Project 184 El Dorado channel and flume system, located east of Pacific House. The 1,500-foot tunnel was constructed in 1930 to bypass an old section of the canal that was impacted by rockslides and landslide which took out a large portion of the canal downstream.

The recent collapse occurred about 47 feet downstream of the upstream portal and completely choked off flow to the tunnel. The cause of the collapse appears to have been failure of the timber support structures.

**Effect on Water System and Power Generation**

The repair of the tunnel will require an extended outage of the El Dorado canal until March 2015. In terms of water supply, the District has diverted approximately 1,000-1,200 acre-feet of water from this system in the months of January and February for consumptive use. Since EID has an integrated water system, even with the extended canal outage this water supply can be diverted from Jenkinson Lake instead, therefore customers will not see an impact to their water service.

However, the extended outage will result in the loss of power generation revenue at the El Dorado powerhouse and increased pumping costs.

Power revenue in January – February typically averages $800,000 per month. Also, with the canal out of service the District must pump water from Jenkinson Lake via our transmission system to serve Pollock Pines at a cost of approximately $24,000 per month. Also to conserve Jenkinson Lake supplies, the District plans to pump from Polson Lake to serve El Dorado Hills water demands at a cost of approximately $40,000 per month. In normal years the El Dorado Hills water treatment plant is typically shut down during the winter months and customers in El Dorado Hills are served water by gravity from our eastern supply sources.

Primary repair work for the collapsed section is expected to be completed by the end of February 2015 to bring the canal back into service, with final permanent repairs scheduled for completion during the normal fall maintenance outage in 2015.

**Conservation Goal**: 30% **Year-to-Date**: 27% **Cumulative since 1/1/2014**: 17%

As of December 16, see DROUGHT, page 4