



IRRIGATION NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2022

The 2022 Irrigation Season Is Set To Begin On March 2

Date subject to change based on current hydrologic conditions. March 2 will be the start of the 10-day run.

What Does the Future Hold?

SSJID Growers,

On my desk in my office at SSJID sits a crystal ball, a seemingly odd relic for a professional engineer/manager. The crystal ball was a parting gift from co-workers at a previous irrigation district employer and a playful reminder of the age-old question that many water managers are asked this time of year:

"What does the water situation look like?"

My co-workers thought the orb would better equip me to answer that question because so much of the answer this early in the year depends on future rainfall, and not just what has already fallen.

So, what does the water situation look like for 2022? So far, the precipitation we've seen to date is impressive, but of course the answer still depends on what may happen in the near future. The good news is we are off to a better start when compared to last year. Rainfall at our Tri-Dam Project Beardsley Reservoir in the Stanislaus watershed last water year through January 31, 2021 measured 5.8 inches or 61% of average. In the same time for this year 2022, the gage is already registering 22 inches, or 114% of average. We still need about 16 inches of rain and/or snow to get to average for the year and much more to break the current drought cycle. About 50% of our annual rainfall typically falls before February, meaning that there is still plenty of potential for more rain as spring approaches. Let's just hope the storm door opens again.

Other Items

There is no shortage of issues that SSJID is tackling on your behalf. Here are a few notable highlights.

- SSJID has been working diligently over several years develop its Water Master Plan, a planning effort that will allow the District to strategically plan for capital projects over a 30-year horizon to anticipate operational needs, threats, and opportunities. I'm excited to say we're on track to wrap up this effort this year. Find additional information on this District effort in our Engineering Department Manager's update on page two of this newsletter.
- I want to publicly thank our staff who have remained committed to keeping us functional during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Many have stepped up and pitched in for

PETER RIETKERK
General Manager



sick co-workers to ensure reliable irrigation and drinking water, and even administrative services through this challenging season. Their commitment and flexibility is to be commended.

- The District continues to fight the State Water Board's 40 percent unimpaired flow mandate in court, while monitoring and participating at the state board level as necessary to promote reasonable, scientifically-based plans that ensure resiliency for people, economy, and the Stanislaus river ecosystem.

A Few Staffing Notes

We recently welcomed **Katie Patterson** to assume the newly created Public and Government Relations Manager position. Katie comes to the District with local and national experience in both agriculture and government. We are excited to welcome her to the team and look forward to her interacting with customers and community representatives.



Katie Patterson

Finally, on somber, yet celebratory note, our very own Assistant General Manager and Chief Financial Officer **Bere Lindley** will be retiring on April 1, 2022, after faithfully serving SSJID for 12 years. I want to thank Bere for his strategic stewardship of SSJID's finances and his countless positive contributions across our organization. Your friendship, intellect, and dry wit will be missed. Congratulations!



Bere Lindley

10-Year Redistricting Process Begins; Hearings Scheduled on March 8 & 22

It's that time again—assessment is under way to prepare for this decade's redistricting of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID). Like all local governments that elect by voting division, SSJID must update its elected representative's boundaries every 10 years to reflect changes in population based on data from the most recent U.S. Census. In addition to analyzing census data, the Board of Directors will work with experts and collect feedback from our communities. We invite you to participate in online public hearings scheduled for 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 8, 2022, and Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

About Redistricting

Under state law, voting divisions of special districts should (1) be nearly equal in population, (2) be as compact as possible, (3) consist of geographically contiguous areas, (4) to the extent feasible, have boundaries that coincide with existing recognized natural boundaries, and (5) to the extent feasible, preserve existing communities of related and mutual interest. Over the next two months, input regarding these factors will be collected and integrated into the development of a plan for redistricting SSJID.

According to Senate Bill 594, passed in August 2021 by the California State Legislature, the deadline for final approval of a redistricting map for special districts like SSJID is April 17, 2022. With that deadline in mind, the Board of Directors is gathering information on the county's population and communities of interest and is scheduled to vote to approve a final plan at their meeting on March 22. Preliminary options will be made available for public comment beginning with the hearing on March 8, and the public comment period will last until the meeting on March 22. From now until then, comments can also be made online (info@ssjid.org) and by calling (209) 249-4600. For more information, please visit our website at <https://ssjid.com>.

Water Master Plan Update

The Water Master Plan is a long-term planning effort that includes financial modeling and capital planning over a 30-year horizon to anticipate operational needs, threats, and opportunities. The District has made significant strides over the past year and anticipates concluding this effort in 2022. While we can't predict the future, SSJID is using this planning effort to evaluate potential future scenarios and chart a direction for the District that promotes water supply reliability, operational flexibility, and financial sustainability.

The bulk of the work has continued through staff led efforts behind the scenes and include the development of analyses and a long term capital improvement program to prioritize projects like the Canyon Tunnel, which would add significant reliability to the District's operations. Next steps include performing financial



Forrest Killingsworth
Engineering Department Manager

modeling to determine how to schedule and fund identified projects that would maintain and enhance service and increase dependability to our customers over the long term. During this multi-year effort the District has led several stakeholder meetings with a 25-member, customer-based group. This feedback has been valuable in shaping recommended priorities. Staff plans to engage customers in 2022 for a final opportunity for input before finalizing this plan. *Stay tuned and look for updates on our website!*

Water Resources Update

What was once a hopeful start to the 2022 water year, water managers throughout the State are now planning for another consecutive dry year. Unprecedented October storms brought over six inches of rain to parts of San Joaquin County. The holiday storms that followed brought well above average precipitation totals to the Valley and most importantly, much needed snow to the mountaintops along the Stanislaus River.



Brandon Nakagawa
Water Resources Coordinator

Every year, the SSJID Board of Directors anxiously awaits the Department of Water Resources publication of the Bulletin 120 Snow Survey compiled around the 1st of the month from February through May. As had been expected, the February 1 Bulletin 120 Update reported that despite the early storms, unusually dry conditions in January resulted in precipitation totals falling just below average for the year and are threatening to move further below average should dry conditions persist. Water Managers were also alerted that the San Joaquin River Hydrologic Index is CRITICAL and an early indication of dismal water supplies for communities down the San Joaquin Valley.

SSJID encourages its agricultural and municipal customers to be mindful of water use practices to ensure that water is efficiently used and not wasted.

Although New Melones storage levels have slightly improved since the end of the 2021 water year, currently, New Melones storage is just under 1 million acre-feet compared to over 1.5 million acre feet this time last year. Staff will continue to monitor hydrologic information as it becomes available and stay on top of New Melones Reservoir operations.

Fortunately for SSJID, our most senior pre-1914 water right held jointly with Oakdale Irrigation District, is projected to produce a full entitlement. Despite the favorable news for SSJID, the rest of the State remains on high alert and are preparing for more drastic water restrictions.

COVID Update

SSJID remains open on a limited basis and has continued to provide continuity in services during the ongoing pandemic.

Winding Down Our Maintenance Season

Here are few highlights of projects accomplished this year:

Cleaning the Open Ditches

The team has been able to clean the R ditch, U-V ditch, and the Q ditch, and are on track to complete the T ditch.



Frank Avila
Irrigation Operations Manager

Control Room Parking Lot Process

SSJID has graded and installed a liner and drains around the reservoir bank to stabilize the area for a new parking lot and access to the new building at the site on Carrolton Ave.

Frankenheimer Canal

Crews started maintenance this year to repair cracks on both sides of the canal walls. This year we were able to get 3,200 feet complete, leaving 1,400 to be completed in the 22-23 maintenance season.



Joint Supply Canal (JSC)

The Joint Supply Canal is the critical lifeline for SSJID that conveys all of the District's water diversions, and a partial diversion for OID, to key canal distribution points and makes it possible for SSJID to provide irrigation and drinking water to our communities. The JSC work this year was minimal, the canal was in fair condition, crews spent 4 days repairing wall cracks and 4 floor holes, 1 day removing rocks that fell into the canal and the rest of the time was dedicated to start a tree removal project, for trees that are next to the canal walls or leaning over the canal.

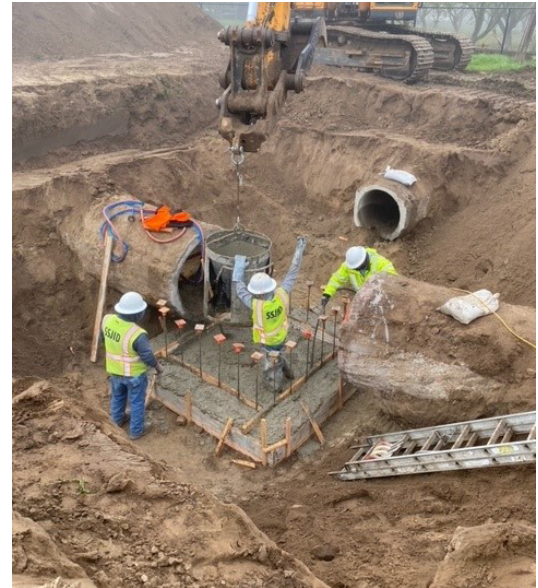
Van Groningen Reservoir Concrete Slope Lining

Crews shotcreted approx. 30,000 square feet of slope around the control room at Van Groningen Reservoir near Carrolton Ave. and River Road. In all, the project required 38 cement trucks to complete the job!



Installed New Single Cell Control Boxes

After completion crews turned their focus to the Qg-line, to install a single cell box in need of repairs. Crews installed new boxes (2 each) on the Qg Sta. 114 & Qg Sta. 97 to help managers control water in shorter intervals to be more efficient when serving customers.



Cut Down Pour Over Walls & Install Slides

SSJID teams also cut down existing pour over walls inside control boxes to help managers maintain water levels below ground while servicing sprinkler customers. This work was performed on the Wc-1, Ob-5, Q7, Qf-2, R-5, Qk-8, Q10, & W6. These modifications help managers serve both sprinkler and flood customers on a lateral more efficiently.

Heavy Equipment

Operators worked to remove sand from the Main Distribution Canal (MDC) and hauled in soil to stabilize the west bank of the canal. Prior to this project, crews graded the banks on Drain 10, the French Camp Outlet Canal, and at Drop #2. The truck driver team also hauled extra dirt from the Water Treatment Plant to assist with this project and utilized dirt that was removed from the construction of the new drying beds for the plant.

Remodeled Boxes

SSJID's box crew completed the remodel of seven boxes that required updating this season.

Success Stories

SSJID team members **Ed Defreitas** and **Clinton Carter** passed their Class A testing and are now are newest Class A driver license holders. **Tom Lindsey** was our first team member to use a new training protocol to accelerate attainment of the truck driving operation license, which streamlines the education and practice time to earn a truck driving license. *We are happy to have them added to our SSJID truck driver operators list!*

POWERED BY PURPOSE UPDATE

SSJID prevails in legal appeal; one step closer to replacing PG&E

In December, the Third District Court of Appeal handed SSJID an important legal victory, ruling the district can pursue PG&E's electrical assets through eminent domain. The court also validated the San Joaquin County approval process that determined SSJID has the ability and authority to provide electric utility service to its customers. For more, visit poweredbyssjid.com



P.O. Box 747 • Ripon CA 95366

SSJID Board Of Directors

Bob Holmes, President | Division 1

Mike Weststeyn, Vice-president | Division 4

Glenn Spyksma | Division 2

Dave Kamper | Division 3

John Holbrook | Division 5

Permits Required for Easement Encroachments

SSJID delivers water through a system of more than 300 miles of ditches, canals and underground pipelines throughout the District. The District's easements for these facilities, whether recorded or unrecorded, require landowners to seek permission from the District before performing work within the easement area or installing improvements that might damage or interfere with the District's facilities or use of its easements. Easements around these facilities allow the District the space it needs to properly operate and maintain the infrastructure.

SSJID Standard Easements for Pipelines

Width = 30 feet, centered on pipeline

No tree or other deep-rooted crop shall be placed or permitted within 15 feet from the edge of the pipeline and no building, structure, explosive, well or guy wire shall be placed within the easement area.

Encroachments made or placed within a District easement without a permit from the District may result in removal at the property owner's expense.

We are Here to Help

To prevent conflicts within District easements, please call before beginning an improvement project or new orchard development:

Call Dawn Driesen in the Engineering Department at

209-249-4619 The District will locate and mark District easements located within your property and determine if any permits are required. Structure permits are free and encroachment permits cost \$200 to cover county recording costs.

Dial 8-1-1 Before You Dig

California law requires that you call Underground Service Alert – Northern California (USA-North) at least two working days, but no more than 14 calendar days, prior to commencing excavation. Once you have notified USA-North, all utility owners (including SSJID) are required to locate and mark their facilities within the defined area.



Meet The Crew

Your 2022 Irrigation Division Managers

Division 1 209-652-9793

Drew Pitcock
Andrew Betschart
Nathan Walker
Andrew Teicheira

Division 2 209-652-9784

Austin Jackson
Eddie Defreitas
Nathan Walker
Andrew Teicheira

Division 3 209-652-9775

Randy Sprinkle
Ken Bedsaul
Clint Carter
Colin Sparkman

Division 4 209-652-7025

Josh Stanley
Hunter Day
Clint Carter
Colin Sparkman

Division 5 209-652-3427

Jason Wirstlin
Jason Andre
Chris Sousa
Cody Williams

Division 6 209-652-2409

B. Scott & C. Stevens
Michael Travao
Chris Sousa
Cody Williams

Visit www.ssjid.com to view division service area maps.



BILLING REMINDER

All outstanding balances from 2021 must be paid in full to receive irrigation service in 2022. Manage your account online at www.ssjid.com or call the District office at 249-4600.