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New Rates Fund Reliable Irrigation Water *Proposal to increase irrigation rates passes after Public Hearing*

MANTECA, CA – The South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) Board of Directors adopted a five-year schedule of changes to irrigation rates following a Public Hearing on July 25, 2023. The new rates will enable SSJID to continue providing a dependable water supply and outstanding service to agricultural customers while maintaining long-term financial stability.

“Our area’s farms and economy rely on irrigation water, and we are grateful to our customers for their faith in our stewardship of these essential services,” said SSJID Board President Mike Weststeyn. “These changes will allow SSJID to address critically aging infrastructure and other current and future water reliability challenges.”

Beginning on the 2023-2024 San Joaquin County Property Tax Bill, the flat rate charge will be adjusted to \$38 per acre (\$50 minimum). The adjusted volumetric rate, which is based on water use, will be \$5 per acre-foot for Tier 1 and \$12.50 per acre-foot for Tier 2, starting in the 2024 irrigation season.

The decision came after a comprehensive Proposition 218 process, which gave customers and property owners a chance to participate, and file a written protest if they opposed the proposed rates. Customers received a Notice of Public Hearing along with a protest form by mail and had the opportunity to attend three informational meetings held in Escalon, Manteca and Ripon in June and July, in addition to the Public Hearing. Out of 3,257 eligible parcels, a total of 332 protest ballots were received.

“The cost of providing service has historically exceeded revenue generated from irrigation rates,” said SSJID General Manager Peter Rietkerk. “By adopting this rate schedule, SSJID is more adequately balancing financial sustainability, customer value, and the reliable and exceptional service our customers have come to know and expect.”

SSJID last increased irrigation rates in 2000. Results from a Cost-of-Service Study conducted by an independent financial expert, along with the District’s Water Master Plan (WMP), confirmed the need to raise rates.

Subsequent increases through 2028 will occur annually, and must be confirmed by the SSJID Board each year prior to going into effect. The Board has the option to reduce the rate increase amount each year.

For more information, including the Cost-of-Service Study and five-year rate schedule, visit www.ssjid.com/rates.

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About the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID)

South San Joaquin Irrigation District was established in 1909 and is headquartered in Manteca, CA. SSJID provides agricultural irrigation water to over 50,000 acres surrounding Escalon, Ripon and Manteca, and wholesale drinking water to over 215,000 residents in Manteca, Lathrop, Tracy, and in the future, Escalon. SSJID, along with Oakdale Irrigation District, owns and operates the Tri-Dam Project, a series of storage reservoirs and electric generation facilities that produce zero-carbon hydropower in the Stanislaus River watershed.

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