



Spring 2007

The mission of KRCOD is to provide flood protection, cooperate with other agencies to achieve a balanced and high quality water supply, and develop power resources on the Kings River for the public good.

Speakers' Bureau Programs Available

Kings River Conservation District has available speakers' service presentations to discuss issues relating to the valley's environmental, energy, and water needs.

There is no charge for the program and we would be happy to schedule a presentation.

If interested, please e-mail or phone Toni Munoz at 559-237-5567, ext. 105 or tmunoz@krcod.org.

To Learn More

- about the Kings River Conservation District, visit our website at www.krcod.org.

KRCOD News

Critically Dry Conditions Facing Kings Water Users

Month after month with little or no storm activity this past winter and early spring is creating critically dry conditions and much reduced water deliveries for Kings River users.

The gloomy water supply situation, which will also cut deeply into Kings River hydroelectric energy production for the Kings River Conservation District and Pacific Gas and Electric Company, comes as no surprise. It could literally be seen on the ground by Kings River Water Association snow surveyors as they measured snowpack water content.

"On April 1, snow conditions are supposed to be at their peak but our staff found little snow to measure and could see a great deal



Ed Dittenbir, Kings River Water Association hydrographer, records very little snow and even some bare ground showing at Rowell Meadow for the April 1 snow survey. April 1 is the date upon which the snowpack is supposed to be at its season's peak.

of bare ground showing," said Kings River Watermaster Steve Haugen, who manages the KRWA.

Overall average Kings River snowpack water content measured for the April 1 California Cooperative Snow Survey was just 42 percent of normal.

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Community Choice Wins Big CPUC Nod KRCOD's Power Partners Begin Giving Plan Final Approvals

California Public Utilities Commission members have made the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority's Community Choice power project California's first to have its implementation plan fully certified.

"This certification by the Commission is a major accomplishment and moves Community Choice much closer to being able to provide benefits to the communities, businesses and residents in our region," said Tom Haglund, Hanford's Deputy City Manager and the Power Authority's chairman.

CPUC action in April has been followed by the first actions among the Kings River Conservation District's municipal partners to give final approval to a program agreement for participation in Community Choice. As of June 6, approvals had been given by Hanford, Corcoran, Kerman, Kingsburg, and Kings County.

Clovis, Corcoran, Dinuba, Fresno, Kerman, Kingsburg, Lemoore, Hanford, Parlier, Reedley, Selma, Sanger and Kings County were the first

valley agencies to join the Power Authority. In addition, Tulare County has become the Power Authority's 14th member agency. KRCOD is to be the electrical energy provider.

"KRCOD is pleased to see these agencies demonstrate strong leadership in moving forward with what has been said to be the most innovative energy program this region has ever seen," KRCOD General Manager David Orth said.

Under a 1992 state law establishing Community Choice, cities and counties may combine electrical loads of their constituents for bulk electricity purchases. The local utility company would continue to deliver power and own its distribution system, and handle billing, service and maintenance. Customers may opt to choose to continue buying power directly from the investor-owned utility.

"This program is all about choice; choice for the customer and choice for cities and counties in electrical generation," said Haglund.

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Water Bill Is Boost To River Fishery

The Kings River Fisheries Management Program may be about to gain financial support and federal involvement. Bipartisan approval on May 16 by the U.S. Senate of a new Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) could lead to a shift in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers environmental enhancement priorities for the Kings River.

Kings River Conservation District and Kings River Water Association leaders have been asking Congress to remove a long-standing Corps of Engineers proposal to develop an expensive multi-level intake structure on the upstream face of Pine Flat Dam in favor of federal involvement in the 8-year-old Kings River Fisheries Management Program.

KRCD, KRWA and the California Department of Fish and Game have been partners in the fisheries program along with Public Advisory Group members since 1999.

The program has resulted in extensive studies, data collection, monitoring and, most significantly, habitat improvements in and along the river downstream from Pine Flat Dam, all on a very modest budget.

The multi-level intake structure was proposed by the Corps as a means of controlling temperatures of water released into the Kings River through KRCD's Jeff L. Taylor Pine Flat Power Plant.

However, completion four years ago of a turbine bypass system at the power plant has proven highly effective, at far lower cost, in managing river release temperatures.

The multi-level intake structure was identified in lengthy reconnaissance and feasibility studies conducted by the Corps over several years beginning in 1993. The studies were aimed at mitigating effects of construction of Pine Flat Dam, a Corps facility completed in 1954.

The WRDA provides \$20 million for Kings River fishery work. Senator Barbara Boxer, who chairs Environment and Public Works Committee, sponsored the Kings River language. The measure passed the Senate on a 91-4 vote.



*General Manager's Report
David Orth*

Fisheries Program Success

There is something about a successful and smoothly running program that tends to ensure that it may not get a great deal of attention.

That certainly is the case with an environmental program of which the Kings River Conservation District, Kings River Water Association and California Department of Fish and Game - not to mention our important Public Advisory Group - are very pleased. It's worthy of review.

Eight years after its establishment, the Kings River Fisheries Management Program is not only going strong, it has significantly improved habitat below Pine Flat Dam with many more enhancements planned.

Fish census counts are up. Reports from anglers are encouraging. Trust and understanding between the water and outdoor sports community has continued to build positively and productively. Here are some of the reasons why.

The Kings River Fisheries Management Program came about because of fundamental changes in philosophical and social priorities that, over the past 35 years, have resulted in much greater care and concern for environmental resources.

Agreements signed May 28, 1999, launched the program with support and dedication of resources from the KRWA and Kings River water users, and the KRCD.

That included a great deal of water voluntarily made available. KRWA member units dedicated 12 percent of their total supply to enhance minimum releases downstream from the dam while creating a temperature control pool of 100,000 acre-feet in Pine Flat Reservoir to help maintain colder water for trout.

Funding was also pledged. KRCD and KRWA each year have collectively given \$100,000 for Kings River fishery improvements. The Department of Fish and Game has lived up to its promise to seek at least \$100,000 through annual state appropriations. Tremendous amounts of staff time and equipment have also been provided.

The first five years included two big projects, KRCD's Thorburn Spawning Channel near Piedra and the Corps of Engineers' turbine bypass construction (for water temperature management) at Pine Flat Dam. There were a few smaller projects but, more importantly, a tremendous amount of data collection, study and planning took place.

That preparation has laid groundwork for recent habitat improvement work which has included boulder and spawning gravel placement, channel ripping, development of riverbank coves and jetties, fish egg incubation and enhanced trout planting (occasionally including trophy trout).

Monitoring has advanced. State-of-the-art telemetry transmitters have been surgically implanted into nearly 200 trout in several plantings over the past two years. Tracking has been conducted by ground, float-boat and aircraft. A tremendous amount has been learned about fish behavior that will be useful in future Fisheries Management Program planning and implementation.

Right now, the program's greatest challenge is this year's minimal water supply. Reservoir storage will decline quickly once this summer's water run, shortened dramatically by a lack of winter rain and snow, takes place.

Low water conditions reduce the availability of cold water needed during the late summer and fall months when river releases are at a minimum but air temperatures can still soar with the potential of heating water beyond the 75 degrees F or so that trout can tolerate.

This is nothing new. This is the program's ninth season and seven (including this one) have been dry. It will be difficult but what has been learned about managing temperatures during past dry years should be a big help later this summer, as will operational flexibility built into the program.

All in all, this is a program with results that speak for themselves. We're proud to be part of it.

KRCD Names Citigroup As Regional Energy Provider

The Kings River Conservation District has named Citigroup to supply energy to the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority's Community Choice program.

"Citigroup brings to the table a highly qualified team backed by the largest financial services firm in the world," said David Orth, KRCD General Manager. "KRCD is pleased that Citigroup has become our partner in making Community Choice a success."

As a pre-eminent fortune 500 financial services company, Citigroup maintains the highest ratings of any domestic bank with extensive experience in managing significant energy portfolios.

KRCD announced it is negotiating a term sheet with Citigroup to supply energy to future Community Choice customers and to meet the program's objectives.

"Citigroup has demonstrated its commitment to the objectives of Community Choice of providing a reliable, affordable energy supply," Orth said.

CPUC Nod, *cont.*

Implementation is expected to start in November 2007, serving all municipal facilities within the Community Choice service area and first making the program's anticipated cost savings available to local government. By November 2008, the program would offer its benefits to all customers within the service area.

The Program will not start until nine of the 14 Authority members determine the financial objectives of a 5 percent discount in initial generation rates and stable, predictable costs are met.

The San Joaquin Valley Power Authority was formed in November 2006 to develop and conduct electricity-related programs for the region.

To learn more about the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority's program, visit www.communitychoice.info.

Power Plant Construction Application Being Readied By KRCD

An application is being prepared for submission to the California Energy Commission, the state agency that would decide whether or not the Kings River Conservation District should be permitted to build a new power plant near Parlier.

"KRCD cannot decide to build the plant on the Bethel Avenue site until the California Energy Commission reviews the application and grants a permit. Only then can KRCD and the SJVPA Board determine whether the plant will be built."

As we have already demonstrated, KRCD is committed to an open, responsive and comprehensive public process so everyone can be heard."

In April, more than 125 people attended an open house at the Parlier Community Center to learn more about the proposed 500-megawatt, natural gas-fired power plant.

During the open house, residents expressed concerns about air and water quality, traffic, noise, and property values among other things.

Orth assured residents that the plant would not be built unless the CEC determines that there are no significant impacts or violations of air quality standards or public health standards.

"There are very positive benefits coming out of this project," Orth said during the workshop. "We will improve air quality to the region. We will improve groundwater quality to region."

The proposed site adjoins Parlier's wastewater treatment plant. Treated wastewater that now is percolated into the aquifer would be reused to produce steam for generating electricity. The result would be improved groundwater quality around the site.

Orth said the plant would have to use the latest available emission reduction technology and be a part of a successful emissions offset program that would combine to actually improve valley air quality.

"The Energy Commission process is rigorous," Orth said. "It will examine the plant's maximum possible impacts - and KRCD will have to demonstrate that they can be mitigated satisfactorily. We must also show that the plant would not harm residents or children in the area. We believe we can do that."

After an application is filed, there will be many opportunities to comment on the plant to the Energy Commission, which will also schedule formal hearings.

KRCD plans to sell the electricity it generates to its municipal partners that are members of the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority and are seeking to establish a Community Choice energy project. (Please see related story, pg. 1.)

Orth said KRCD's objective is to develop additional power resources for the valley region with greater reliability and cost savings.

Renewable Energy Proposals

On behalf of the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority (Authority), the Kings River Conservation District (KRCD) announced the solicitation of competitive proposals for up to 400 megawatts (1 megawatt supplies energy to approximately 1,000 residents) of renewable energy.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks responses from eligible renewable energy generators to meet the projected long-term electric power needs of the Authority.

"The Authority intends to meet or exceed the California renewable portfolio of 20 percent in the most expeditious manner possible," said Haglund. "Our goal is to begin renewable energy deliveries as early as 2008."

As a contractor of the Authority, KRCD is committed to identifying eligible renewable energy generators within this region to support the generation of green energy in the San Joaquin Valley.

Renewable electric power resources may include, but are not limited to, sources such as biomass, biodiesel, fuel cells using renewable fuels, digester gas, geothermal, landfill gas, municipal solid waste, ocean wave (as well as ocean thermal and/or tidal current), photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal, small hydroelectric or wind.

The request for proposals closed at the end of May. KRCD is in the process of evaluating the proposals that were submitted.

Critically Dry Conditions Facing Kings, *continued*

Although the Fresno Irrigation District was able to begin a 3-month run May 1, most Kings River units will be limited in making water deliveries to portions of June and July before their supplies – based upon the river’s water rights entitlement schedule – run out.

Kings River water entitlements are actually determined by the river itself, based upon how much flow would have naturally been in the river at the foothill town of Piedra on each day if there were no dams. Low flows mean that some units will be entitled to no 2007 water at all and, if they operate, will have to use water they stored during 2006 in Pine Flat Reservoir when runoff was plentiful.

California Department of Water Resources officials on May 29 forecast that the Kings River’s total discharge into Pine Flat Reservoir during the peak April-July runoff period would be 460,000 acre-feet, or 38 percent of average, assuming average amounts of precipitation would occur for the rest of the season.

If no late spring rain or snow were to fall over the watershed, the DWR believes the Kings may generate only 4000,000 acre-feet of runoff, just 33 percent of average.

Pine Flat Reservoir, which nearly filled last year and required a large and lengthy flood release to evacuate storage



Symbolic of a dry winter, Tehipite Dome towers over seldom visited Tehipite Valley along the Kings River’s Middle Fork with almost no snow visible on April 1.

from a massive winter and spring snowpack, had a fair amount of carryover storage.

It reached its maximum 2007 storage on May 30 of 698,671 acre-feet, 69 percent of capacity.

Haugen said Pine Flat storage can be expected to experience a rapid draw-down during the summer’s irrigation deliveries.



Classroom On The River

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A bright March day provides a brilliant opportunity for these Sanger High School students to learn about the Kings River, its water operations and environment from rafts as they travel downstream from a park below Pine Flat Dam. Kings River Conservation District personnel made presentations about the river and its natural resources.

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