



Summer 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

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

There is no charge for the programs and we would be happy to schedule a presentation. If interested, please e-mail or phone Toni Munoz-Woods at 559-237-5567, ext. 105 or tmunoz@krcd.org.

To learn more about the Kings River Conservation District, visit our website at www.krcd.org.

KRCOD News

Thirteen Communities Make Historic Choice For Local Power Plan

Thirteen San Joaquin Valley municipalities are poised to create California energy history through their formal actions to make the new Community Choice power program a reality.

During the months of May and June, the counties of Kings and Tulare along with the cities of Hanford, Kerman, Corcoran, Kingsburg, Clovis, Dinuba, Selma, Lemoore, Parlier, Sanger and Reedley elected to take the necessary steps to proceed with Community Choice.

"The Kings River Conservation District is pleased to see the city councils and county boards demonstrate strong leadership in moving toward Community Choice," said David Orth, KRCOD general manager and program manager for the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority.

"Residents and businesses in these cities and counties will soon be benefiting from more economical energy generation."

Of the Authority's 14 members, only the City of Fresno's council decided not to proceed.

Residents and businesses within the boundaries of the 13 participating communities will have the option to choose between remaining full customers of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) or Southern California Edison (SCE) or enrolling in the Community Choice program and receiving electrical generation from the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority at lower and more stable rates.

continued on page 4

Upper Kings Water Plan Approved By KRCOD Board; Grant Will Be Sought

A regional approach to addressing a variety of water supply needs has taken a big step forward with the completion of an integrated regional water plan that has been adopted by the KRCOD board.

Directors acted during a special July 30 meeting to accept the regional plan, which was prepared cooperatively over the past year by the Upper Kings Basin Water Forum, and set the stage for submitting a \$9 million grant application for project funding.

KRCOD is the lead agency for the Water Forum, a multi-stakeholder group consisting of representatives from local water districts, cities, counties and public interest groups.

"Historically, the management of water resources has been limited to independent operations by overlying local water agencies and individual water users," said KRCOD General Manager David Orth. "The Water Forum was formed to increase communication and collaboration in order to create regional solutions for water resources management. This is the first time all of the various stakeholders have come

together to work on developing a long-term, basin-wide plan to address water issues in the Kings River basin.

The Forum's new integrated regional water management plan states that overdraft of groundwater is the primary issue to be addressed in the Kings River basin.

Over the past 40 years, water levels in the Fresno area have dropped by 40 feet. In the Raisin City area, they have dropped by 150 feet. This is a result of water demand that has exceeded the available surface and groundwater supplies as they are currently developed and managed. The continued groundwater overdraft is not sustainable, and the urban growth pressure in the region, coupled with the need to sustain the agricultural economy, call for improved water resource management.

New water supply infrastructure is needed to meet future demands from urban growth, environmental needs and agricultural usage. The new plan makes the Water Forum competitive for current and future funding opportunities from the state.

continued on page 4

Kings River Water Delivery Season Has An Early Ending

An early conclusion to the irrigation season has taken place all around the Kings River service area, and in a few cases there were no water deliveries at all because of critically dry conditions during the past winter and spring.

Drought conditions cut sharply into this year's Kings River water supplies and virtually all irrigation deliveries were expected to be concluded by early September.

"Nearly all of our member units' water delivery seasons ended earlier than usual," said Kings River Watermaster Steve Haugen. This year's runoff during the April-through-July period ended up totaling 435,289 acre-feet, 35 percent of average.

Haugen, who manages the Kings River Water Association and oversees river water entitlements and deliveries, said the upper Kings River service area water run (for units that divert upstream from Highway 99) largely ended by early August.

Consolidated Irrigation District, which serves an area from Sanger through Caruthers, did not operate because of insufficient water supplies. The Kings River Water District in the Centerville Bottoms plans to deliver water into the fall.

Many lower Kings River units ended brief water runs in July or planned to reduce or conclude their 2007 operations by early September. Among the first to close their headgates were the Laguna Irrigation District and Last Chance Water Ditch Company seasons. Murphy Slough agencies shut down August 1.

South Fork units planned to operate until late August while People's Ditch Company and the Lemoore Canal and Irrigation Company projected ending their seasons around August 31. A coordinated lower river water run, in which channel seepage losses were shared, ended August 10.

Two lower river agencies, the Crescent and Stinson canal companies, were unable to make

continued on page 4



General Manager's Report
David Orth

Increasingly Regional Solutions

There was a time in the San Joaquin Valley's not-to-distant past when many water issues, concerns and even some power questions tended to have a distinctly provincial or even parochial look.

Water supplies, systems, operations and policies have typically been looked upon from local points of view. The 1-million-acre Kings River service area and its rapidly urbanizing cities and towns have been no exception. Water systems – both agricultural and municipal – that have supported and sustained farms and communities were virtually all developed, and traditionally managed, to meet local needs.

That seems to be changing. Regional approaches to dealing with complex issues and meeting public needs have taken root – a transition that has been swiftly occurring.

Regional government has been around in California as long as the state itself. When California entered the Union in 1850, the legislature created 27 counties. That grew over the next 60 years to total 58 counties as regional populations and economic activities grew. Tulare, Fresno and Kings counties, portions of which are within the Kings River service area, came about to satisfy such demand.

Within these three counties is a checkerboard of local agencies formed to provide services. Among them are the Kings River Conservation District, the 13 Kings River public water and irrigation districts (plus 15 stockholder-owned mutual water companies) and 14 cities surrounded by the district.

Units that deliver Kings River water to users have long worked together through the Kings River Water Association. Until fairly recent times, however, there has not been (with a few exceptions) a great deal of dialogue – particularly the constructive kind – with non-water agencies.

Today, just within the Kings River region, there are four different areas in which dissimilar agencies are working together collaboratively. KRCD is playing a key role in all of them.

- **Upper Kings Basin Water Forum** This program has brought together the water agencies that founded it – the Fresno, Alta and Consolidated irrigation districts, KRCD and the California Department of Water Resources – with stakeholder agencies and other state organizations such as Fresno County and the cities of Sanger, Fowler, Kingsburg, Parlier, Selma, Reedley, Dinuba, Kerman, Clovis and Fresno, and several environmental and conservation groups. Forming the Water Forum was a constructive response to a state mandate that future water grant applications be based upon regional needs and planning. An integrated regional water management plan was recently completed.
- **Kings River Fisheries Management Program** After years of contention and distrust, this consensus and scientifically-based effort by KRCD, KRWA, the California Department of Fish and Game and the program's Public Advisory Group has emerged as a cooperative model for improving habitat and angling.
- **Southern San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition** Although it mostly involves water agencies, the Coalition has brought regional representatives together to deal with a host of crucial water quality issues more effectively, including the conditional agricultural discharge waiver,
- **San Joaquin Valley Power Authority and Community Choice** This power-related effort has matched KRCD's experience and objectives with the needs and desires of two counties and 11 cities to control power generation more directly while increasing energy reliability and reducing user costs.

Results to date in each arena have been encouraging. It's always more productive and satisfying to work together in search of positive solutions with the result of making the Valley a better place to live. KRCD is proud to be part of each process.

KRCD Affirms Commitment To Improve Air Quality

Kings River Conservation District directors have made official what the district and its Community Choice power program partners have been saying all along.

KRCD's board approved a resolution in July affirming the District's commitment to pursuing local renewable generation projects and developing or participating in projects to provide regional air quality benefits.

Despite the District's frequently repeated pledges to meet or exceed all air quality requirements, concerns have been voiced over air quality in connection with KRCD's plans to construct a 500-megawatt, gas-fired, base-load power plant to supply the District's Community Choice partners in the new San Joaquin Valley Power Authority.

The resolution states that local and newly created emission reductions credits will be utilized by KRCD "to the fullest extent possible to offset any generation projects to achieve a net emissions reduction in the local air basin."

It also directs KRCD's General Manager David Orth "to meet with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to develop and/or participate in other projects that provide regional air quality benefits".

Also formalized by the resolution is the District's further commitment to Valley air quality by pursuing local renewable generation projects for at least 20 percent of the power provided by KRCD to the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority. The resolution points out that KRCD and the Authority members are "in a unique position to develop new programs and activities to further reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gases" while focusing on improving air quality while developing its new power plant.

Earlier this year, KRCD supported formation of the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization. The Clean Energy Organization is intended to help the San Joaquin Valley address its economic, environmental and growth challenges through increased use of and reliance on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources.

KRCD Embraces Solar Energy For Power Authority

Community Choice, already poised to begin blazing a big new Central California energy trail, is also going to be partially powered from above.

Solar power will play a major role in helping the Kings River Conservation District and its municipal Community Choice partners in the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority to meet a state requirement that the program's generation portfolio ultimately use renewable energy for 20 percent of its power needs by 2010.

KRCD and Cleantech America, LLC have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide up to 80 megawatts of utility-scale, emission-free, peak solar power to the Authority in what would be the nation's largest utility-scale photovoltaic facility by far.

The solar facility will provide reliable, cost-effective green energy to Valley residents and businesses.

"The promise of Community Choice is to have local control of our energy destiny," said David Orth, KRCD

general manager and Authority program manager. "This means providing a choice of energy providers, stable and predictable rates, and adding value to the region through the development of new, local renewable energy sources like utility-scale photovoltaic solar which is generated within our service area, close to our energy load."

Orth noted that "developing 80 megawatts of clean energy from the sun would take us a long way toward achieving these goals while demonstrating the value of Community Choice."

"This is a visionary step by the Kings River Conservation District," said Bill Barnes, Cleantech America chief executive officer. "The extraordinary economies of scale which can be achieved by facilities of this magnitude would have a dramatic effect on helping solar energy achieve grid parity. Solar on this scale would unquestionably attract many solar manufacturing, fabrication and related jobs to the San Joaquin Valley and further promote the region's growing image as California's 'Solar Valley'."



Barnes added that "because in-grid zero emission solar provides peak power when it is needed most, during the hottest times of day during the hottest times of the year, it supports increased generation reliability in the region."

The MOU calls for the facility to be developed in phases of 10 megawatts in 2009, 30 megawatts in 2010 and 40 megawatts in 2011.

Upper Kings Water Plan, *continued*

Projects proposed for development have been identified through an integrated hydrologic model to determine the optimal benefits provided.

The plan evaluates alternatives to determine the greatest positive impact to managing and developing surface and groundwater supplies in a sustainable manner.

The Water Forum region covers approximately 610,000 acres of land within the boundaries of the Alta, Consolidated and Fresno irrigation districts, and Raisin City Water District. It also includes Fresno County and the cities of Fresno, Clovis, Kerman, Dinuba, Reedley, Sanger, Selma,

Kingsburg, Parlier and Fowler.

On August 1, KRCD applied for a second round of funding under a \$64 million integrated regional water management implementation grants program.

Environmental organizations such as the Fresno Audubon Society, Sierra Club, California Native Plant Society, and the Kings River Fisheries Public Advisory Group; and water agencies (including Kings River Conservation District, Kings River Water Association, the California Water Institute, the Department of Water Resources, Department of Fish & Game and the Regional Water Quality Control Board) are all members.

Kings River Water Delivery Season, *continued*

deliveries because of the short supplies.

River releases from Pine Flat Dam have dropped steadily as water agencies exhausted their supplies and concluded their seasons.

Fishery minimum flows were expected below Pine Flat Dam sometime in September, ushering in the start of what Haugen believes will be a challenging fall period for managing river water releases with temperatures cold enough for trout.

On farms across the 1-million-acre Kings River service area, heavy groundwater pumping has cushioned impacts of surface water supply reductions this year.

Thirteen Communities Make Historic Choice For Power, *continued*

“This Community Choice program is all about choice – choice for the customer and choice for our cities and counties,” said Thomas Haglund, deputy city manager of Hanford and chair of the Authority. “The councils’ actions allow customers to have that choice in electrical generation.”

Participation in Community Choice will be voluntary. All customers will be automatically enrolled in the program unless they elect to opt out. All current PG&E and SCE customers within the Authority’s service area will receive

information describing the program and will have multiple opportunities to express their desire to remain with PG&E or SCE, in which case they will not be enrolled in the Community Choice program.

PG&E and SCE will continue to deliver the power and handle billing. Start-up of the program for businesses and residents is scheduled for 2008.

For more information about the Authority’s program, visit www.communitychoice.info.

IS YOUR CONTACT
INFORMATION
ACCURATE?
PLEASE UPDATE US
BY PHONE AT
559-237-5567
or EMAIL AT
comments@krcd.org

Kings River Conservation District News

Published quarterly by the Kings River Conservation District, a political subdivision of the State of California serving 1.2 million acres in Fresno, Kings and Tulare counties.

Please send subscription requests to:
Kings River Conservation District
4886 E. Jensen Ave.
Fresno, California 93725

Telephone: (559) 237-5567
Website: www.krcd.org

Vol. 32, No. 2

Kings River Conservation District
4886 E. Jensen Avenue
Fresno, CA 93725

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fresno, CA 93706
Permit #1687