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541 H St. - Los Banos, CA 93635

An informational newsletter for water users and landowners in the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors' service area.

EXCHANGE perspective

JULY 2019

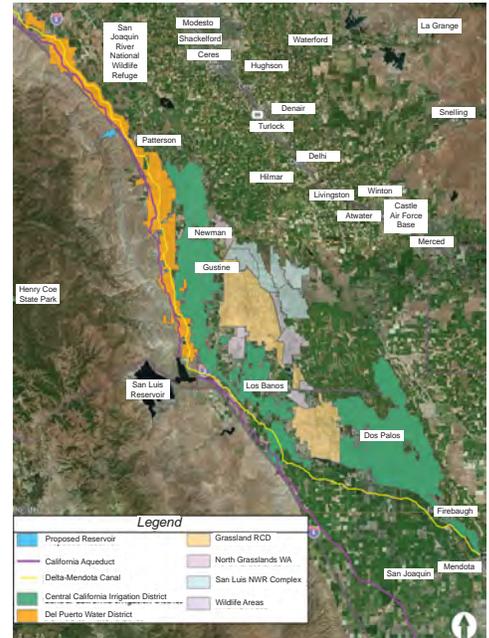
Proposed reservoir could relieve pressure on water deliveries

A proposed 85,000 acre-foot reservoir west of Patterson is moving forward in its planning stages and could break the impasse that has prevented new reservoirs from being built in California.

"This is an exciting project," emphasized Executive Director Chris White of the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors. "Water from the reservoir could flow through the Delta-Mendota Canal and even the California Aqueduct."

Named the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir (DPCR), the project is being managed by the Exchange Contractors and the Del Puerto Water District.

"The west side of California's Central Valley has been hard hit by droughts and regulatory restrictions that have curtailed water deliveries," said White. "These shortages of water deliveries



have been felt on the farm and in rural communities south of the Delta. A new reservoir that could deliver water to

Continued Page 3

---Potential benefits of reservoir---

Potential benefits of the proposed Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir could include but not be limited to:

- Water storage
- Improvement of water management in the Delta
- Development of Incremental Level 4 refuge water supply
- Improved water supply reliability
- Improved peak irrigation season water supplies
- Recreation benefits in DPCR and increased recreational opportunities along Del Puerto Creek
- Environmental enhancements along the Del Puerto Creek riparian corridor
- Renewable power generation
- Improved ability to manage regional groundwater resources
- San Joaquin River Restoration flow storage
- Cross-County water partnership opportunities
- Increased flood control protection to downstream facilities
- Regional self-reliance and economic benefit from agricultural production, jobs, and industry multipliers
- Regional, State and National security from the production of safe and abundant food supplies

Temperance Flat Reservoir

New group undertakes planning

The State, communities and San Joaquin Valley agriculture's future remains dependent on available water supplies and the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors and Water Authority continues to build partnerships seeking to develop new supplies.

"There's no doubt that water is necessary for agriculture's future and the communities it serves, along with improved conveyance through the Delta," says Steve Chedester, Director of Policy and Programs for the Exchange Contractors. "We continue to look at the potential of new water from a reservoir that could be built at Temperance Flat on the upper San Joaquin River."

Chedester explained that a new Joint Powers Authority, Temperance Flat Reservoir Authority (TFRA), has developed tools to provide information needed by water agencies, districts and cities to determine whether they would become involved in making the much talked-about Reservoir a reality.

The San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority previously worked toward securing funding from Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement

Act of 2014, for building Temperance Flat. Funds totaling \$171 million were issued to the group for designated purposes as part of the planning and construction. This group is now branching out in its activity and the TFRA is taking the lead on moving Temperance Flat Reservoir forward.

TFRA membership currently includes the Exchange Contractors, Friant Water Authority and the City of Fresno. This group has retained a consultant that is currently developing the analysis tool that will help inform potential water agency's boards of directors with information including costs of water supply that could be available from Temperance Flat.

JPA entities to provide 'bulk of funding'

"We are expecting a report from the modeling analysis or gaming tool to be completed by the end of this summer," said Chedester. "That analysis will tell us how much storage an investor may want to purchase, how water could be stored in the reservoir whether through direct diversion or through exchanges and frequency of use.

"This will be important information since the eventual make-up of the TFRA will include entities that will provide the bulk of the funding for constructing the new reservoir. The amount of additional money from the State and from the federal government is not expected to be a large amount at this time.

"That leaves the water districts, cities and others to determine whether they will fund the balance of what is expected to be a \$3 billion project."

Chedester explained that constructing Temperance Flat Reservoir is "a major piece of needed surface water storage south of the Delta."

"Determining to be a part owner of a large reservoir such as Temperance Flat (1.3 million acre-feet) is prudent to provide dry year reliability," he added. "And we must complete our due diligence to provide our boards of directors with enough information so they can determine whether a new reservoir at Temperance Flat is an appropriate project for our members."

Drainage JPA formation to be determined

Work is underway to determine if a Drainage JPA will be formed to convey sub-surface tile water to the 6,000 acres of the San Joaquin River Quality Improvement Project.

"We are hopeful to have the information ready by this fall for the respective boards to decide whether to form the JPA," explained General Manager Jeff Bryant of the Firebaugh Canal Water District.

Firebaugh is one of five districts involved in the JPA decision. The others are Central California Irrigation District, Panoche Water District, Pacheco Water District and Charleston Water District.

In addition to managing the sub-surface tile water, the JPA would facilitate stormwater discharge to the Project area.

Trip to nation's capital involves more than shaking hands with elected officials

Representatives from the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors traveled to the nation's capital earlier this year to get reacquainted with congressional members and their staff, as well as key personnel in various government agencies.

"We did more than simply shake hands," recalled Executive Director Chris White. "We had meaningful discussions with everyone we met and provided valuable updates on issues confronting our landowners."

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program was a priority discussion item during the meetings. Several years of preliminary work leading to the reintroduction of salmon into the river has been completed; but construction of needed infrastructure to safeguard delivery systems to farms have yet to be built.

"We highlighted the need for securing funding for fish screen projects as part of the Restoration Program," said White. "It is important that water users are in compliance with regulations governing the Program."

"We want to see a successful program in operation, and it must include the ability to divert water to farms, even when fish are in the river. That is why the fish screens are so

Reservoir...

Continued from Page 1

these areas would be very beneficial."

Water for the reservoir could come from the Delta-Mendota Canal and possibly the California Aqueduct.

Congress has earmarked \$5 million through the WIIN Act to fund the preliminary studies.

---Federal water rights emphasized in Sacramento visit---

The importance of explaining federal water rights belonging to the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors was a primary objective of meeting with California elected officials in Sacramento recently.

"Our reason for being involved at the state level is to protect water rights in general and those belonging to the Exchange Contractors in particular," explained Executive Director Chris White. "There are quite a few new members since our last visit, and we needed to make sure that they and their staff understood the Exchange Contractors' role in California water."



Delegation reacquaints congressional members with purpose, operation of San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors.

(Photo courtesy of California Farm Bureau Federation.)

important."

Joining White for the four-day trip were the managers of the entities of the Exchange Contractors---Jeff Bryant, Firebaugh Canal Water District; John Wiersma, San Luis Canal Company; and Randy Houk, Columbia Canal Company. Also joining the group was Jarrett Martin, CCID's Deputy General Manager, and Steve Chedester, Director of Policies and Programs for the Exchange Contractors.

Several of the congressional representatives were newly elected and had never received a briefing on the Exchange Contractors and its operations.

Visits were also conducted with Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman, professional staff at the Office of Management and Budget, Congressional Research Service, and staff of several key congressional committees.

Water can be a complicated issue for many individuals to understand. Legislators with no real background on how water flows through California may sit on committees that make pivotal decisions on how water is delivered to farms and cities.

"We explained how our pre-1914 water rights were secured, and the importance of that water being delivered through the Delta-Mendota Canal," said White. "The people we met with expressed an understanding after our discussions."



San Joaquin River Exchange
Contractors Water Authority

PO Box 2115
Los Banos, CA 93635

Tel: 209.827.8616
Email: contactus@sjrecwa.net
Website: www.sjrecwa.net

Progress made toward new water supplies

*By Chris White
Executive Director*

We are making real progress toward our strategic goal of shoring up our dry year reliability by developing up to 50,000 acre-feet of dispatchable groundwater and surface storage.

Years of drought and the inability of government agencies to deliver contracted supplies of water due to evolving regulations have resulted in the Exchange Contractors taking extra steps to provide adequate water supplies that farmers in the service area of the Exchange Contractors member units need to grow their crops. As a result, the Exchange Contractors' Board of Directors have undertaken an intense effort to safeguard our farmers' water supply.

A mix of projects that includes new reservoirs, ground storage and an active management which includes exchanges with other water agencies, water banking and transfers have been targeted.

Projects we are working on include:

1. Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir
2. Los Banos Creek Detention Dam
3. Orestimba Creek recharge and recovery
4. Los Banos Creek recharge and recovery
5. Exchanges, banking and transfers

It is essential that we continue our efforts to make these projects a part of the successful management tools that are utilized to provide the water needed by our farmers.

We cannot afford to be inactive, even after achieving additional water supply projects. History has proven that we must move forward in constantly seeking an increased reliability to our water supply.