

North San Joaquin Water Conservation District  
Weekly Update  
Friday January 13, 2024



Sunset on the restarted Tecklenberg recharge project.

**CalFed Pipe Break:** EBMUD's Daily water supply report briefly showed inadequate water for operations just before Christmas. I turned the pump off and may have caused a break of the line between the pump station and the vineyard as a result of pressure put on the line from backflow (the system does not have a backflow device but staff is planning to install one.) It is also possible it was caused by roots that had grown into the pipe in the break location. After consulting with Board President Valente Staff planned an emergency repair by Pacific Southwest Irrigation. The repair and pressure relief valve install will cost about \$15,000 and will be on for Board approval in January. CalFed was back up and running on January 8.

**Recharge Operations Update:** The District is currently operating Tecklenberg and CalFed. We expect to bring on Reynolds and Lakso by Wednesday next week when the New Temporary North System Station should be running assuming we have adequate water in the river. Current forecasts suggest that is likely. It is hard to overstate how impressive an accomplishment going from one to four recharge project in one year is for the District. Kudos to the Board and Contract staff that put all of this work in motion.

**Town Hall:** Reminder that the townhall is coming up on February 22 at 9 am at the Grape Festival Grounds. Staff will bring a Strategic Plan Report Card for Board Approval to the January Board Meeting.

We intend to present the report card as part of the Town Hall along with a report on Groundwater Charge Expenditures, Irrigation and Recharge Update and a SWEEP Grant training at the end. A Sneak Peek at the Report Card Format is below:

## Goal #1: Ensure Fiscal Sustainability

### Objective #1

Establish a sufficient District-wide revenue source to fund the next 10 years of the District's planning, capital and operations expenses for all activities that benefit the District as a whole

#### ACTION

#### STATUS

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|---|--|
| <b>#1</b> Complete Strategic Plan process and associated 10-year financing strategy                               | <b>DONE</b> Adopted the Strategic Plan in December 2021  |
| <b>#2</b> Develop plan to impose groundwater charges or land-based assessments to fund 10-year financing strategy | <b>DONE</b> Developed the plan to impose the groundwater charge in 2022                        |
| <b>#3</b> Legal process to impose groundwater charge or land-based assessments                                    | <b>DONE</b> Adopted a groundwater charge in June 2022, which passed a majority written protest |
| <b>#4</b> Establish and update assessment roll and collect funds  | <b>DONE</b> Updated the assessment roll and started collecting funds in early 2023             |

**Broken North System Valve Repaired:** Arnaudo Construction removed the frozen valve (in fact there were two!) at Tretheway and Acampo Road on Thursday and Friday which will allow the Lakso project to come on line by Wednesday of next week when the New Temporary North System Station is expected to be in operation. To date we have only been able to operate Reynolds on the North System because of flooding risk posed by water getting in the Acampo Road pipeline. Pretty easy to see why the old valve wouldn't close in the photo below...it was full of soil. The second butterfly valve was also frozen open from being over torqued and bent at some point in the distant past.





**Mettler Recharge Project?** Staff inspected the south system pipeline north of Kettleman Lane on Friday January 12 and found a boil near the line in the Mettler Vineyard. Larry responded to the scene for an inspection and felt it was not a problem in the near term. Staff will plan an investigation of the line sometime before spring bud break.



**North System New Temporary Pump Station Status:** A large crew of District Staff and contractor's descended upon the North Station Site on Friday January 5, 2024 to do the in water work for the install. The State Permit required the installation of a fish net, Cal Fish and Wildlife staff were on scene as well as Moore Biological Consultants, De Graff Engineering, Arnaudo Construction, a three-man Dive Team, Pacific Southwest Irrigation who fused the HDPE, and Fish Bio. It was a huge staff investment mandated by the nature of the project along with our permit conditions. The project went flawlessly thanks to great work from District Contractors.



New North System Temporary Pump Station





Pacific Southwest Irrigation Staff Fusing the HDPE



Old Pump and Screen



New Screen

(Update Continues on next page)





New Screen



Fish Net Installation

**North System Bank Cleanup:** District staff responded to the North System Bank on Friday of this week to begin restoring the bank. The work required rakes and shovels since the skid steer can no longer reach the bank around the pipeline. Staff will respond further with straw and native riparian seed (which took a little work to find!) next week to close out permit conditions.



**Tecklenberg Operations Putting Water back in Pixley Slough:** The Tecklenberg Project is on the South System which releases tail water to Pixley Slough. Minimum pump operations for the South system sit at about 2.5 CFS which is a bit more than we can deliver to Tecklenberg. As a result, we are putting about .5 CFS into Pixley currently.



**Governor's Proposed 2024-2025 State Budget.** During his press conference announcing the proposed budget, Governor Newsom announced a \$37.86 billion deficit, significantly less than the \$68 billion deficit estimated by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) last month. This lower deficit is in large part because the Governor expects revenue from capital gains to increase in the 2024-25 fiscal year relative to the LAO's estimate and the Governor thinks it is less likely the State will enter a recession. We shall see! The good news is there is still some funding for programs of interest to the District. We don't have a full picture yet, but here are some key takeaways for you:

- No more SGMA implementation grant funding (the District secured funding in Round 1 and I don't foresee another round of funding unless a resources bond passes)
- SWEEP Direct-to-Farmer program (originally scheduled for January 2023) is postponed to 2024-25

*Budget excerpt: State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program—A shift of \$20.6 million General Fund to the GGRF for the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program. Funding being shifted for the Program is delayed to 2024-25.*

- The OPR Regional Climate Resilience program is cut, but still has \$25 million (we'll check with the grant manager to see how much will be available this August to inform your decision about whether to apply)

*Regional Climate Resilience—A reversion of \$25 million General Fund and a reduction of \$50 million for the Regional Climate Resilience Program at the Office of Planning and Research. The Budget maintains \$25 million previously allocated to this program.*