

NORTH SAN JOAQUIN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2016

50 YEARS AGO..... THE SOUTH SYSTEM WAS BORN

Are you a farmer along the NSJWCD South System? Do you know the story of the Alpine/Victor pipeline? The story began 50 years ago, in 1964, when landowners organized themselves into the [Mokelumne South Irrigation Association](#) to construct an underground pipeline to deliver irrigation water from the Mokelumne River south from Tretheway and Brandt Roads to Pixley and Bear Creeks. They borrowed \$240,000 at 5% interest from F&M Bank, secured

easements, and completed construction in two years.

In 1966, the Association sold the pipeline and easements to NSJWCD. NSJWCD agreed to pay back the Association's F&M loans, less any money the landowners received from the U.S. Soil Conservation Service for the project. NSJWCD connected the pipeline to its new South System pump station on the Mokelumne River...and surface water deliveries began! Surface water deliveries along the South System peaked in the 1980's at

about 9,000 acre-feet per year (AFA). In recent years surface water deliveries were only about 3,000 AFA. Drought conditions and the trend toward pressurized drip irrigation have caused farmers along the system to rely on groundwater.



20,000 AF BY THE YEAR 2020? CURRENT EFFORTS TO REHABILITATE THE SOUTH SYSTEM AND USE AVAILABLE SURFACE WATER

NSJWCD has a right to divert up to [20,000 acre-feet](#) of Mokelumne River water in normal to wet years. About half of this can be diverted and used for the South System, but only 3,000 AFA has been used in recent years. The 50 year old pipeline and pump station are deteriorating. Major repairs are needed to maximize surface water use.

[Clock Ticking to Use It or Lose It](#)

In 2014 the State Water Resources Control Board gave NSJWCD more time to use its water right - [but if NSJWCD](#)

[doesn't use the water by 2025 it risks losing it. The NSJWCD Board has made rehabilitation and use of surface water through the South System a top priority. Pumping Restrictions Looming](#)

Also in 2014, the State Legislature passed the "Sustainable Groundwater Management Act" or "SGMA". SGMA requires that all critically overdrafted groundwater basins be "sustainably" managed by 2020. Maximizing the use of NSJWCD surface water will help our area [avoid or minimize](#)

[groundwater pumping restrictions](#) that are likely under SGMA.

[Step 1: A New South Pump Station](#)

As part of a water rights settlement in 2014, NSJWCD received \$1.75 million from East Bay Municipal Utility District. This money will be used to rebuild the South Pump Station in 2017 - replacing the multiple old pumps with a new variable speed pump and motor. The project should reduce pumping costs by half.

[Step 2: Pipeline Rehabilitation](#)

The next step is to rehab the delivery system. The current

pipeline is cast in place concrete and operates at low head. The District either must repair the existing system, or convert to a fully pressurized system, or some combination of the two. Cost estimates range from \$5 to \$15 million. NSJWCD needs landowner input to select a rehab plan for the pipeline.

How Will We Pay for It?

NSJWCD does not have a current funding source for the pipeline rehab. Options include applying for grants and assessing landowners. While grants are preferred, they require at least 50% matching funds from the

district. NSJWCD is seeking landowner input regarding how to structure the funding for the pipeline. Who should pay? How much? Landowner input is critical. Please join us:

**Monday November 28th 2pm
Lodi Library Community Room**

Funding options and strategies will be discussed but no formal funding decisions will be made at this meeting. Funding decisions can only be made after noticed public hearings and compliance with Proposition 218.

That said, timing is important. In order to apply for large grants,

the district needs to have design and funding plans in place.

Grant Funding for Landowners

NSJWCD is also helping landowners along the pipeline apply for California Dept. of Food and Agriculture grants to fund landowner improvements to allow farmers to connect to the pipeline and use surface water.

Up to \$200,000 per landowner may be available. If you are interested, please call Russell Frink at 209-224-5568 by December 2, 2016. These funds can be used for pipeline connections, meters and piping to connect surface water to existing systems.

North San Joaquin Water Conservation District Board of Directors:

Joe Valente, Tom Flinn, David Simpson, Hugh Scanlon, Marden Wilber

View a Map of the South System on Our Website: www.nsjgroundwater.org

Regular Monthly Board Meeting: Last Monday of each month, 2pm, Lodi Public Library Community Room

NSJWCD - Nov. 2016 Newsletter
Post Office Box E
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[Type the recipient name]
[Type the recipient address]

South System Improvement Project Public Meeting
Monday November 28th 2pm
Lodi Library Community Room: 201 W. Locust Street, Lodi