

Chairman's Corner

On the agenda for the NSJWCD's special meeting on January 11, 2010 was an item titled "Discuss Formation of an Advisory Committee." For me, this item is of great significance, not only because of the things I see such a committee will be able to do, but also for what it represents symbolically for the District.



*Tom Hoffman,
Chairman*

I see this advisory committee holding regularly scheduled quarterly meetings a week or two in advance of the District's Board meetings and with its members being drawn from the same five zones within the District as the Board's members come from. At the same time, it needs to be an independent body. If required, it may hold its meetings with the District manager attending, in case questions are asked, but without the participation of the Board or its members.

The purpose of the Advisory Committee would be to provide general input on items important to the District. The committee would vote on their recommendations and then provide an informed and educated opinion as a single united voice before the Board.

One major benefit I see an advisory committee having is potentially being able to involve more people in the decision making process and drawing in individuals whose talents may extend beyond the scope of those held by the elected Board members. An Advisory Committee could certainly

have subcommittees in specific areas, say finance or engineering, that could fine tune ideas before they are presented to the full board.

The advisory committee may choose to meet at different hours than the current Board does. The Board's meeting schedule has been a point of contention for some time now, so an alternative schedule could allow people who can not attend those meetings to air the concerns and ideas at another.

Such a committee would also serve as a training ground for future board members. Someone serving on the Advisory Committee for several years would have a grasp on issues and policies of the District. When vacancies occur, they would be in a good position to join the Board and eliminate the learning curve that frequently accompanies changes.

All these are certainly positive reasons for establishing an Advisory Committee. But what I find to be the most significant is what this change means symbolically. Our District has gone from one that is governed by a board that met alone to one that encourages participation. We have made great strides in the past year. The development of our website, where meeting times and agendas are posted, where minutes of past meetings are available, is another example, as is this newsletter you are now reading. I believe these changes are for the better. This is your District. It governs your groundwater basin. You need to be involved and informed. I think the formation of an Advisory Committee is a huge step in the right direction.

Those interested in serving on the committee should contact Robb Hoag at robbhoag@gmail.com.

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What is an Acre Foot?

In the water world, water is commonly measured in acre feet. One acre foot of water can fill one acre of land, approximately the size of a football field, 1 foot deep. An acre-foot contains 325,900 gallons of water, and can supply the annual indoor and outdoor needs of one to two urban households.

New Board Member – Dan Parises



*Dan Parises,
Board of Directors*

At the NSJWCD regular meeting on March 2, 2010, Dan Parises was appointed to the NSJWCD Board of Directors. His appointment filled the seat of the District’s Zone 2, vacated by John Ferreria in December of 2009.

Dan brings a variety of experiences to the table as a lifelong farmer and grape grower who has served on

the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors (District 4), the Delta College Board of Trustees, as well as a variety of State water committees including the San Joaquin County Advisory Water Commission and the Folsom South Water Users Association.

Dan stands in favor of exercising the District’s water rights so they are not lost in the future, particularly as California continues to face an escalating crisis over the state’s limited water supply.

Dan lives in the Victor area and will hold the current position on the NSJWCD Board of Directors until the position is up for election in December of 2012.

Pump Charge to be on June Ballot

This coming June, the voting constituency residing in the North San Joaquin Water Conservation District will be asked to amend Measure V. Measure V opposed the District’s placement of a groundwater “pump charge,” on well owners in 2007. Measure V halted future charges beyond the date of the 2008 election. It was supported by the Jarvis Taxpayer’s Association, that asserted the voters have a right to a voice in such assessments. The measure passed with 55% of the votes in favor.

The proposition for the June 2010 ballot will be written by the District’s Board of Directors in accordance with the conditions dictated by Measure V, which stated

the District must return to the electorate to amend the measure if any future charges are to be made. The District will be asking voters to approve the charges and allow the District to resume assessing the well owners who extract water from the underground.

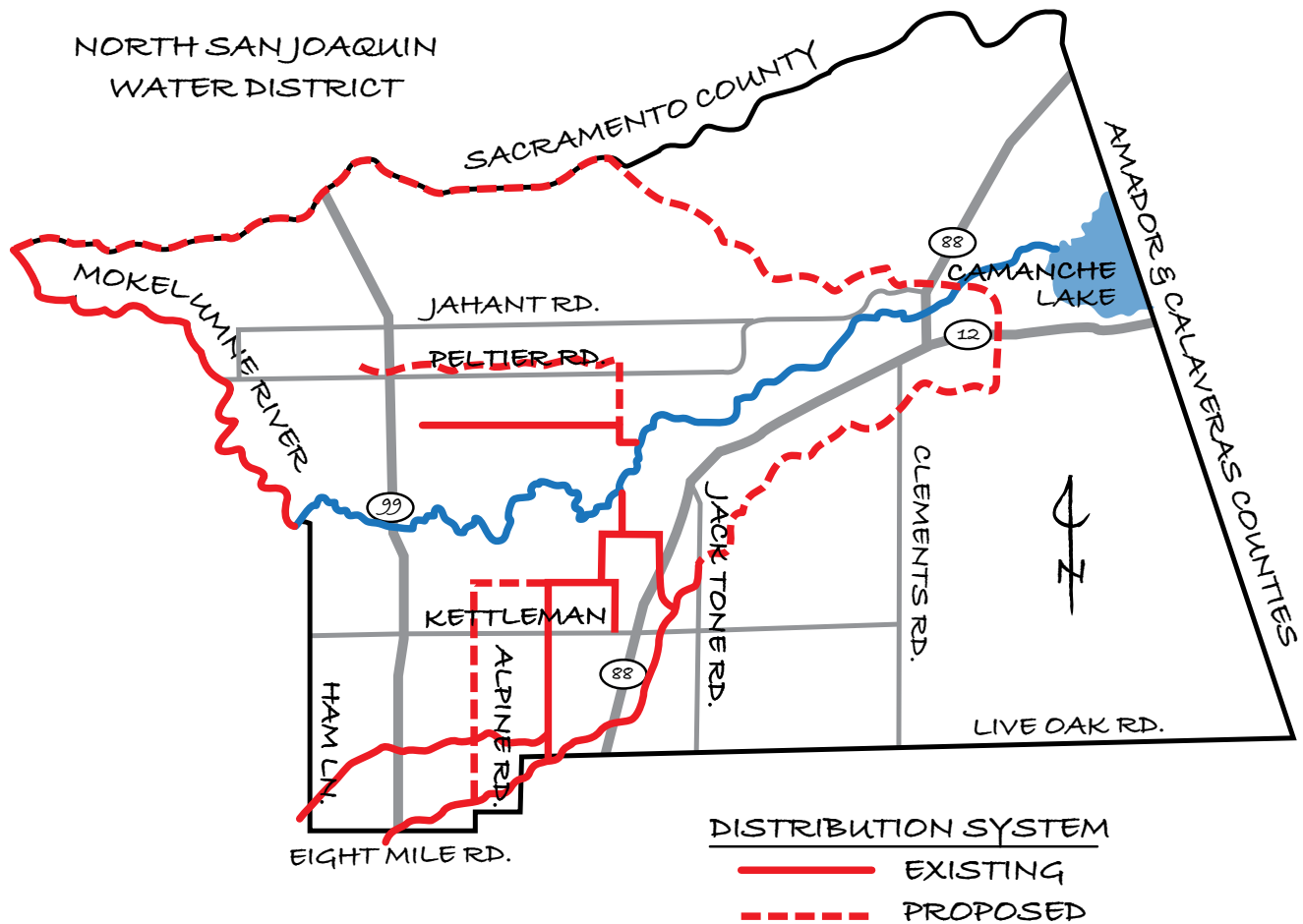
The District will utilize the tax revenue to develop and extend water distribution systems and groundwater recharge efforts. This includes plans to extend and repair the existing distribution system, develop additional recharge facilities and expand the District’s sphere of influence to bring wet-year water down creeks for percolation and irrigation.

The Board feels that the proposition is necessary because of the continued state of decline of the groundwater aquifer in the northeastern portion of San Joaquin County. “We have a duty to future generations to find ways to replenish our ground water table,” says NSJWCD Board Chairman Tom Hoffman. “We urgently need to begin implementing measures now that will correct our current state of overdraft. We have just learned that fifty **families are trucking water** to their homes in western Calaveras County, the eastern edge of our groundwater basin, because of well failures. We have this to look forward to if we don’t get busy repairing our portion of the basin.”

The Board has acknowledged that it was forced to act in haste in imposing the initial Ground water charge in 2007. “Pressure from the State Water Resources Control Board forced us to overlook the need for education. This has led to battles with opposition lawyers and an angry constituency ever since,” said Hoffman, referring to the fact that interpretations of Measure V and its implications are still unsettled pending legal review.

Voter approval of the June 2010 proposition will allow the District to develop recharge basins and widen the acreage that will be able to receive water from the Mokelumne River during wet years.

Save The Date:
Next general meeting, June 1, 2010



WANTED - USERS OF SURFACE WATER

For the purpose of planning future projects, NSJWCD is conducting a survey to identify the location of land owners currently pumping ground water who might be interested in developing facilities to tap into surface water supplied by the District when it is available.

The survey is intended to be used as a tool to determine the location of potential customers and to plan the development of water conveyance systems, such as pipelines, channels and other diversions, in areas where these customers might be reached. It should not be viewed as a contract or agreement. The survey is intended for pump owners near the existing systems AS WELL AS those near the proposed distribution systems shown on the map above. The pump owners should assume that the District will bring surface water to their property lines.

It must be understood the initial cost of the connection to a District pipeline or channel would be the responsibility of the pump owner and would be in addition to any cost of existing facilities (pumps, pipelines, etc) that the land owner may have and already be using. And, as the dual water system would convey surface water from the Mokelumne River, it should be understood that it would only be used when such water is available or approximately 60% of the time.

The District asks that prospective users of surface water identify themselves by completing the following form and mailing it to the District Manager, PO Box 428, Clements, CA 95227.

SURVEY FORM

Name of irrigator _____ Address _____

Phone _____ APN of land to be irrigated _____ Acres _____ Crop _____

Groundwater Levels Continue to Fall

The County Water Coordinator's staff reported to the Groundwater Banking Authority in February that well water levels continue to fall in our District. The water report indicated that water levels in the NSJWCD dropped for many years on record including a 0.9 foot decline from the fall of 2008 to the fall of 2009.

The Fall 09 Groundwater Report released by the County on 2/17/10 shows the following for NSJWCD:

Number of wells measured	121
Number of wells with decrease	79
Number of wells with increase	36
Number of wells with no change	6

The wells with water level decreases of 2 feet or more in 2009 are listed below.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Decrease in ft.</u>
Highway 88 and Atkins Road	2.5
Highway 12 and Johnson Road	2.1
Cord and Acampo Roads	5.2
Liberty and Cherokee Roads	2.0
Harney and Ganero Roads	2.8
Turner and Ray Roads	3.0
Highway 99 and Collier Road	5.5
Peltier and Des Moines Roads	3.5
Collier Road and CT Railroad	2.0
Jahant and Bryant Roads	2.3
Liberty and Jack Tone Roads	3.3
East of Hwy 88 and South of the River	2.8

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