

WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY: GCID Advocates for Water Rights Protections

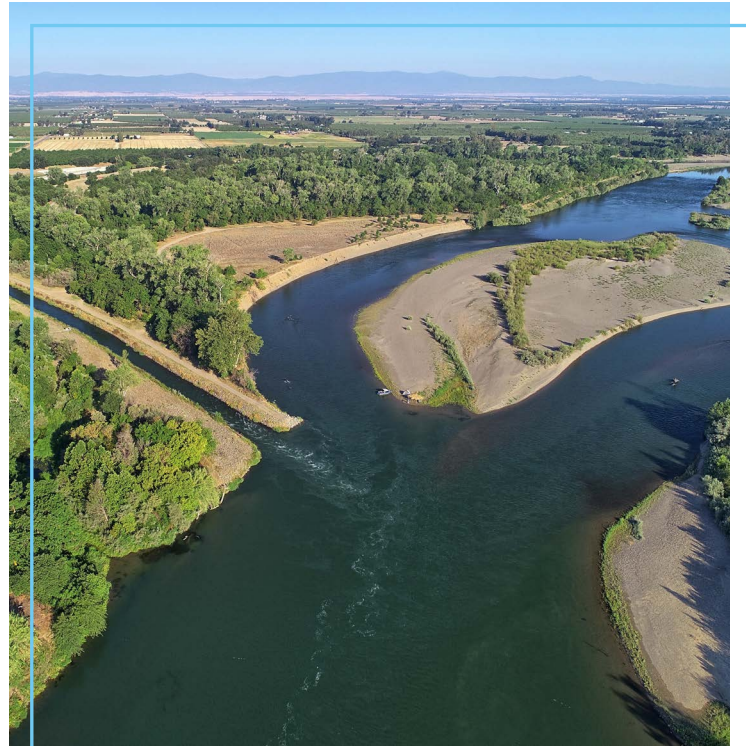
This year, a pair of bills attempted to work their way through the State legislature and threatened the stability of GCID's water supply.

Framed as water reform, Assembly Bills 460 and 1337, would have had the opposite effect, upending California's system for managing water while negatively impacting farmers and families. The devastating ripple effects would have included jobs, housing production and food prices.

The bills' supporters claimed this reform was necessary to fix a broken and antiquated water rights system. GCID acknowledges the room for improvement — especially in water rights enforcement — but these bills would have worsened the problem. GCID endorses expediting enforcement and increasing fines against illegal water diverters and supports modernizing California's water management system, including adding stream gauges and digitizing records.

However, Assembly Bills 460 and 1337 would have overhauled California's 100-year-old water rights system through overreach and unintended consequences. The bills threatened communities, farms, tribes and others who depend on a consistent water regulatory structure. GCID advocated that Assembly Bills 460 and 1337 would not have helped Californians or the local economies in their time of need.

Fortunately, the authors have withdrawn their bills from this legislative cycle and are looking to revise or rethink them for the next legislative session. GCID will continue to advocate for its stakeholders at every legislative level and continue to watch any potential bills that may threaten the viability of GCID's ability to deliver water to its growers.



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ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP:

New Shasta Reservoir Operational Criteria

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation continues to develop a project action related to a new Biological Opinion for winter-run salmon that will change how Shasta Reservoir will be operated into the future.



A lack of available water from Shasta Reservoir devastated Sacramento Valley farmers, communities, birds and other wildlife in 2022. Winter-run salmon, a type of fish found only in the Sacramento River, requires adequate water quality conditions to survive particularly in the spawning and rearing season through the warm summer and fall seasons. They rely on water released from Shasta Dam, and drought conditions have caused their numbers to dwindle drastically. Federal and state agencies, along with tribal partners, have undertaken extraordinary measures to preserve the species.

Reclamation along with state and federal fishery agencies are looking at new spring and fall storage targets to provide better spawning and rearing temperatures during consecutive drought years. However, winter-run are not doing well even in non-drought years and the myopic view to only look at water temperature is detrimental to winter-run in the long term.

An action plan would begin to improve the riverine habitat for winter-run, increasing the survival rate of adults that return to the upper Sacramento River, eggs that are reared in the river and juveniles that leave the Sacramento River system. This requires a comprehensive approach beyond simply managing water temperatures.

The next newsletter, will provide more information on what a plan would look like.

Infrastructure Improvements: A Normal Year

ED HENDERSON, WATER OPERATIONS SUPERINTENDENT

Years ago, an old rice farmer was telling me about some plans he was making for the upcoming planting season, saying, “In a normal year...,” then paused to clarify. “Well, there really is no such thing as a normal year.” This off-the-cuff bit of old-school wisdom has stuck with me ever since and has proven its truth, season after season. Sure enough, this year has been no exception to his rule!

The season began with the District’s ambitious plan to implement an updated measurement program which included digitally recording measurements at every turnout in order to give growers accurate water usage data and ensure accurate water deliveries. After many hours of diligent work by Water Operators, Water Supervisors and the Engineering Department, the bugs are slowly being worked out of the measurement program and to allow for implementing in 2024. Currently, all Water Operators are measuring outlets and entering information.

There are 14 new Water Operators that were thrown into the deep end of the pool this spring, flooding up approximately 98,000 acres of rice. The rookies, all things considered, did an outstanding job in their first “flood up” season. Many of them have a few gray hairs from the experience but have learned a lot and developed some solid water skills. The District would like to thank all of the growers who patiently worked with the new Water Operators, offering advice and guidance. Additionally, the SCADA department embarked on a large-scale project of moving from ClearSCADA to Ignition. This program will give the Water Supervisors and the SCADA team better control of all of the auto gates, pumps, etc. that keep GCID’s water flowing. Ignition is a cloud-based, scalable universal platform that will track, analyze and display all of GCID’s data with an unlimited license for web-based access.

While this has not been a “normal” year, much was learned and will be used to plan for the future and the water is still flowing.

Key Maintenance Project Updates



Minor Intake Dredging Project — GCID removed approximately 3,200 cubic yards of sediment that has accumulated in the intake channel due to high river flows. This project was slated to last from July 10 to July 18, per the California Department of Fish and Wildlife permit extension.



Aquatic Treatments in the Main Canal (Completed) — Growers should note that two eight-hour aquatic treatments were performed on June 29 and July 6. The first was at Norman Check near the Glenn/Colusa County line. The second was at Stony Creek Check by Hamilton City. A total of 4,800 gallons of Cascade was used at a cost of \$414,000.



New Vehicles — GCID has taken possession of a new water truck and a new Long Reach Excavator to help carry out critical infrastructure improvements.



Additional Maintenance Projects — GCID has been working on mechanical aquatic removal from drains, and repairing small bank breaches in the conveyance system on the main canal and

Landowner Relations: Board Election

Ballots for the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Director Election for Division One will be mailed out by August 2, 2023. The election is by mail ballot, but ballots can also be delivered to the District Office. All ballots must be returned by August 29, 2023, in order to be counted. Ballots postmarked by August 29, 2023, will be counted if received within three days after the deadline. If you spoil your ballot, contact the District office for a replacement ballot. Contact Karen at the District office if you have any questions – 530.934.8881.



Welcome, New Employees

GCID WELCOMES TWO BRIGHT, ENTHUSIASTIC INTERNS TO THE TEAM, JACK MARSH AND JACK SWARTZ. LEARN MORE BELOW.



Jack Marsh, Cal Poly
Engineering Intern

"I grew up in Arbuckle, a small town just south of Williams on I-5. I attended Pierce High School and I am currently attending Cal Poly for my Bio Resource Agricultural Engineering degree. I also work for my family's farm located in Grimes with some ground located in GCID, growing mainly almonds, tomatoes and rice. I mainly work as a water operator, equipment operator and fabricator.

At Cal Poly, I am involved with multiple clubs including Poly GOATs, Tractor Pull, ¼ scale Tractor Pull, Grow Crew and Future Fuels. I have worked with several professors in the BRAE department who have made their names known in the water world. They've designed new flow measuring devices, irrigation control gates and have extensively discussed the intricacies of water engineering and control. I am excited for this internship as it provides me with an opportunity to expand my knowledge in the field of irrigation and the inner workings of irrigation districts like GCID."



Jack Swartz, Cal Poly
Engineering Intern

"I am from the small town of Sutter in Sutter County. I attended Sutter High School and currently attend California Polytechnic State University, SLO as an Ag Systems Management major. I am a third-generation almond farmer. Our ranches are located near the city of Live Oak. My dad is a Civil Engineer and the CEO of California Engineering Company (CEC). They work closely with GCID.

At Cal Poly, I have held multiple positions in clubs including Western Bonanza, Agribusiness Management Club and Ag Ambassadors. I have also had the opportunity to take classes with professors who are very passionate about water. I love to learn and I'm so excited for all that I will be learning through this internship."



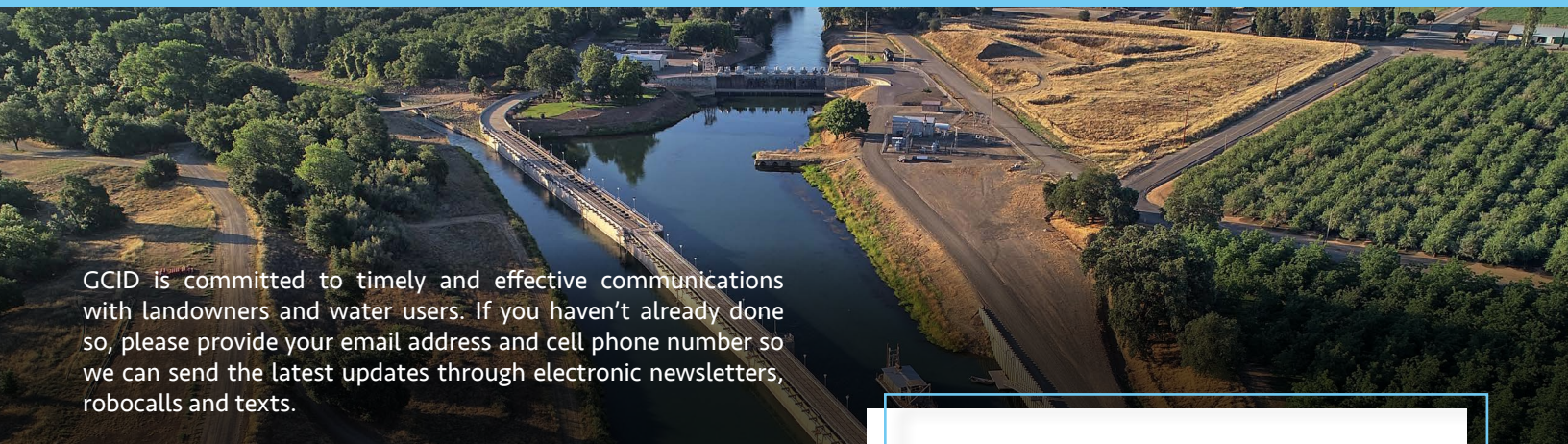
Thank you for your service

Luke Lausten, a 39-year GCID team member, retired June 30, 2023.

Lausten has contributed a wide range of highly valuable skills to the Maintenance and Water Departments in a variety of positions, including Temporary Maintenance Man, Maintenance Man, Relief Ditchtender, Ditchtender, Dredge Operator and Maintenance Worker.




The District and landowners are appreciative of his abilities and thorough knowledge of the District's conveyance system. The District is especially grateful for his diligence, thoroughness, dependability, professionalism, and loyal service.

The District commends and thanks Lausten for his many years of service and numerous contributions on behalf of the District and wishes him well in the years to come.



GCID is committed to timely and effective communications with landowners and water users. If you haven't already done so, please provide your email address and cell phone number so we can send the latest updates through electronic newsletters, robocalls and texts.

Ways to update your contact information:

-  Call the office: (530) 934-8881
-  Email: contact@GCID.net
-  Use the kiosk/tablet at the office front counter