

THE

# IRRIGATOR

## Creating Water Supply Reliability with the Drought Protection Program

On December 17, 2024, the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District (GCID) Board of Directors, staff, legal counsel, and consultants met with water users to discuss the Drought Protection Program (DPP), which is a series of actions and investments that will improve water supply reliability in future years for the benefit of the farms, communities, economy, and environment of the Sacramento Valley. The DPP represents a major change to water management on the Sacramento River and seeks to avoid the repetition of the very detrimental impacts of the most recent drought period during future droughts. The structure and terms of the DPP are established by an agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors (SRSC, an association of entities holding settlement contracts on the Sacramento River with Reclamation). GCID is a member of the SRSC and is subject to the terms of the DPP agreement.

The goal of the DPP is to ensure stability and resilience in SRSC's (including GCID's) water system and prevent the reoccurrence of the devastating impact seen in 2022 to the west-side of the Sacramento Valley, where there was only an 18% water supply to farms, wildlife refuges, and cities. As a result of the unprecedentedly low water supply in 2022, approximately 370,000 acres of farmland were fallowed, the regional economy took a \$1.3B hit, bird and snake habitat was negatively impacted, and salmon had the lowest survival rates in decades. The DPP will avoid another year like 2022 through more conservative operation of Shasta Reservoir (i.e., lower releases of water and higher end-of-dry season storage targets) during certain very dry years combined with funding for SRSCs for Drought Resiliency Projects focused on increasing the efficiency of water use.



Through the first ten years of the DPP agreement, and during only the very driest years when certain criteria are met (historically occurring in 7 out of 100 years), Reclamation may reduce the water to be supplied under all the SRSC contracts by up to an additional 500,000 acre-feet (about 25% of the SRSC Contracts total). Such a reduction would result in a 50% supply under the SRSC contracts. For GCID, the reduction is up to an additional 206,000 acre-feet. The criteria that must be met for the additional reduction are:

- Forecasted end-of-April storage in Shasta Reservoir < 3.0M acre-feet.
- Forecasted end-of-September storage in Shasta Reservoir < 2.0M acre-feet.
- Forecasted inflow from October 1 – April 30 into Shasta Reservoir < 2.5M acre-feet.
- Reclamation forecasts a Critical Year under the Settlement Contracts.

The GCID Board of Directors and staff are currently discussing the most effective use of the funds the District received for Drought Resiliency Projects. 2025 is the first year of the DPP, and with the above average precipitation in the watershed above Shasta Reservoir, GCID and the other settlement contractors will receive 100% of their water supply this year.

## Winter Project Updates: Progress and Key Improvements

GCID's Maintenance, Water and Engineering departments have been hard at work tackling several important infrastructure projects aimed at improving efficiency and reliability throughout the canal system. Below is an update on the projects undertaken during the winter maintenance shutdown period.

### 16-4 Head Gate Improvement

The existing structure has been removed, making way for a new, more efficient 42-inch double opening gated structure. Crews poured a new floor and walls for the updated head gate. In addition, a 30-foot lined concrete section was poured for a side-looker measurement device to ensure accurate water flow monitoring.



### 16-4 Check Structure

This project involved the removal of the existing check and the installation of a long-crested weir. Additionally, the 16-4a head gate and field delivery system was replaced.

### 48-1 Check Structure

The existing check crossing was removed, and a new three-opening check was formed and poured approximately 100 feet downstream. Another existing check structure along 48-1 was retrofitted into a two-bay check crossing to incorporate an ITRC gate for more efficient regulation of water flow.



### Main Canal 3R (MC-3R) Delivery

Crews worked to form and pour a new delivery structure to improve water distribution and flow through the main canal.

In addition to the above projects, crews were busy inspecting, repairing, and replacing gates throughout the Main Canal system to ensure everything will operate smoothly and efficiently. These ongoing maintenance efforts help prevent future issues and maintain the overall integrity of the canal infrastructure.

These winter projects are crucial to enhancing the performance of the canal system, improving water management, and ensuring long-term reliability. GCID looks forward to completing these upgrades to better serve landowners and water users. The hard work and dedication of the crews involved is very much appreciated.



## GCID Board Leadership Transition: A New Chapter Begins

The District would like to take a moment to express its heartfelt gratitude to John Amaro, who has stepped down as the GCID Board President after two years of exemplary service. Director Amaro has served on the Board of Directors for nine years. His dedication, leadership, and vision have been vital to the success of the organization, and the District is deeply appreciative of his contributions and his continued service as a Board Director.

With this change, the District is excited to announce that Director Logan Dennis has been appointed to serve as the new GCID Board President and Director Pete Knight to serve as the new GCID Vice-President. Director Dennis has served on the Board of Directors for nine years and also serves on GCID's Operations & Maintenance Committee, Budget Committee and Pension Plan Committee, and served as Director on the Sites JPA and Reservoir Committees, and as Secretary/Treasurer of the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors. Director Knight has served on the Board of Directors for 32 years and previously served as Vice-President for 30 of those years (1993-2023). Director Knight also serves on GCID's Budget Committee, Diversion Point Committee, Labor Negotiations Committee, Pension Plan Trustees Committee, and as Director of the Colusa Basin Drainage District. Both contribute a wealth of experience and a shared commitment to the mission of GCID. We are confident that under their leadership, GCID will continue to strengthen its impact throughout the District.

Please join us in congratulating Director Dennis and Director Knight as they take on these important roles. We look forward to the continued success and progress that lies ahead.

## Lurline Check and Siphon Replacement Project Slated for Fall 2025 through Spring 2026

In the Fall of 2025, GCID will be undertaking a major construction project on GCID's Main Canal. The project will include the complete demolition and rebuilding of the Lurline main canal check structure as well as the siphon that transports water beneath Lurline Creek directly behind the check structure. This major project is vital to GCID's ability to reliably and efficiently deliver water to the landowners and water users of GCID. The construction timeline for this project is October 15, 2025, through March 31, 2026.

The Lurline replacement will be the last major Main Canal check structure in need of replacement in GCID's sixty-five-mile-long main canal to be replaced, bringing increased safety, flow and control to the canal. Currently, the Lurline Check, believed to have been built in the 1930's, creates waves in the canal which affects downstream flow. Modernizing the structure will eliminate this problem, as well as allowing more water to flow through the system to better service downstream growers.

During the construction period, water in the main canal will be stopped at Abel Check in order to keep the work area dry. This water outage will affect rice decomposition, late and early season tree irrigation, frost protection as well as other crops in the area. Some areas will be completely out of water during this time, while other areas will have partial deliveries available. Please contact GCID if you need more information about how you may be affected.

GCID remains committed to keeping our growers informed about the project's progress. Updates will be provided through our newsletter, website, phone calls and grower meetings. If you have questions or comments on anything related to this project, please feel free to contact GCID staff at 530-934-8881.

## Don Bransford Honored with Prestigious Will S. Green Award at the Northern California Water Association Annual Meeting



Don Bransford, current GCID Director and former Chairman for three decades, has dedicated so much of his life to Northern California and the communities in the Sacramento Valley through his commitment, leadership and tireless effort to the promotion, advancement, and protection of irrigation, water rights, agriculture, and the economic and environmental sustainability of the Sacramento Valley. Over these years, Don has led unprecedented efforts to fully integrate water management in the Sacramento Valley to support and protect our agricultural industry, while also working tirelessly to provide benefits to threatened and endangered aquatic and terrestrial species, as well as migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway, all of which are inextricably tied to the success of water management in California. Congratulations Don!

## Congratulations to Bob Packard and Arno Martini on Their Retirement!

The District is proud to congratulate Bob Packard and Arno Martini on their well-deserved retirements. Together, Bob and Arno dedicated an incredible 90 years of service to the District and its water users, with each of them contributing 45 years of hard work, commitment, and leadership. Throughout their careers, Bob and Arno have made lasting impacts on the District, ensuring the smooth operation of vital water systems and services. Their efforts have been instrumental in supporting the local agricultural community, and they leave behind a legacy of professionalism and dedication.

As they embark on the next chapter of their lives, we wish them both happiness, relaxation, and fulfillment in their retirement. Thank you, Bob and Arno, for your unwavering service, and congratulations on your remarkable careers!

