

THE Current



MID's Customer Newsletter

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Water savings projects will benefit MID growers



Workers install new ditch lining at one of several projects that will help conserve water for MID growers.

With the 2018 irrigation season on the horizon, Merced Irrigation District is busy with a host of projects to modernize its facilities and better meet growers' needs.

"As we like to say, there is no off-season," said Bryan Kelly, MID Deputy General Manager of Water Resources. "Once the irrigation season ends, maintenance and construction work ramps up. All projects have to be completed so that MID facilities are ready to convey water supplies before the start of the next irrigation season."

Among the significant projects MID is working on this winter:

The **McCoy Lateral** serves growers southwest of Livingston. The project includes the demolition, reconstruction and relining of 6,900 linear feet of the lateral. The project will increase efficiency, reliability and capacity of the existing canal, while conserving storage in Lake McClure by approximately 2,000 acre-feet. The project is being partially funded through a grant from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

The **Atwater Drain Bypass** will redirect operational water losses from the Tin Flume Lateral and the 1900 Lateral to another MID

See Back "MID Winter Projects"

MID Water Resources Plan bears fruit

More than three years ago, Merced Irrigation District began developing the Water Resources Management Plan. The long-range business plan is intended to protect and maximize the District's water rights, and ensure MID remains financially sound.

This year, the plan is bearing fruit with

construction of a project that was identified as being among the most needed by MID growers: The LeGrand/Planada Bifurcation Regulating Reservoir serving two of the District's main canals.

"The District said from the beginning that this Plan will be an implementable Plan, not one

See Back "Resources Plan"

Continued From Front: "Winter Projects"

facility, the Deckert Lateral. There the water can then be put to further beneficial use. This project is expected to result in over 1,500 acre-feet of saved water each year. The project, south of Atwater, involves construction of approximately 10,000 linear feet of pipeline, a booster pump station and control structures. The project is located along Highway 140 and Applegate Road.

The El Nido Dam and Recharge Basin Improvement project will significantly benefit and support operations at the southern reaches of MID in the El Nido area. The project includes installing automated gates at the El Nido Dam on Mariposa Creek as well as an automatic gate and flow-measurement structure at the El Nido Recharge Basin.

In the Cressey-Winton area, MID is expanding the **Cressey Groundwater Recharge Basin**. Paid for in part by a State grant associated with the Integrated

Regional Water Management Planning process, this recharge basin was put into service in 2011. In years with adequate



New pipeline is installed at one of several construction projects underway.

surface-water supplies from Lake McClure, water flows into the basin helping replenish regional groundwater. The project is currently about 8 acres in size and work being done this month will expand the basin by another 5 acres,

allowing for even more replenishment.

The **LeGrand/Planada Bifurcation Regulating Reservoir** was identified as one of the top projects that should be completed as part of the MID Water Resources Management Plan. (See separate story "**MID Water Resources Plan bears fruit**")

The new 120-acre-foot regulating reservoir will be located north of Planada on the LeGrand Canal just east of its intersection with the Planada Canal. The regulating reservoir will provide more flexibility in irrigation operations in the Planada and Le Grand areas as well as reducing water lost through operations.

"We have a significant amount of work going on right now," said Bryan Kelly, Deputy MID General Manager. "The 2018 irrigation season is just around the corner, and we are looking forward to putting these projects to use for MID growers."

Continued From Front: "Resource Plan"

collecting dust on a shelf," said Bryan Kelly, Deputy General Manager of Water Resources. "After all of the community involvement we've had, it's great to see ground about to break on major facility modernization projects."

Major recommendations of the Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) include:

- Construction of approximately 12 new water regulating reservoirs.
- Canal automation and improved water control along the major canals that feed into other parts of the water delivery system.
- Improved flow measurement at key points.

Under the WRMP, most modernization projects are expected to be completed in the first 10 years of the 30-year planning window.

The LeGrand/Planada Bifurcation Water Regulating Reservoir is among those projects. The new 120-acre-foot water regulating reservoir is currently being designed. Construction will begin in July 2018.

It is expected to be completed and in



Growers provide important input to MID on the Water Resources Management Plan in 2016.

operation prior to the 2019 irrigation season.

The reservoir will be located north of Planada on the LeGrand Canal, immediately upstream from the headworks of the Planada Canal and Booster Station No. 1. The water regulating reservoir will enhance irrigation flexibility for MID growers in the Planada and Le Grand areas.

MID's Water Resources Plan was developed with significant input from growers and others at a host of workshops and outreach efforts that began in January 2014.

The plan provides long-term guidance to help optimize MID's water rights, facilities, operations and finances. The plan will also

help MID meet environmental requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. It takes into consideration a host of trends for land and water use, as well as existing and upcoming mandated regulations affecting both agriculture and MID operations. Additionally, the modernization of District facilities will allow more water storage to be conserved in Lake McClure by improving operations and reducing operational water losses at key locations.

"It is imperative that MID modernize its facilities in order to continue meeting growers' changing needs," said MID General Manager John Sweigard. "Their businesses are transitioning from predominantly flood irrigation to pressure systems," he said, "and MID must be prepared to meet their water demands both in terms of timing and in the volume delivered."

For more, visit www.MercedID.org

