



# IRRIGATION NEWSLETTER

## SSJID offers \$116M to replace PG&E as region's power provider

On Sept. 3, 2019, SSJID submitted a \$116 million offer to buy electric assets from Pacific Gas & Electric in the utility company's ongoing federal bankruptcy proceeding.

SSJID's offer is part of a new phase of the District's 15-year effort to provide locally owned retail electric service. SSJID's renewed offer is similar to what the district proposed and PG&E rejected in 2016. SSJID has recently validated that the offer still represents fair market value for PG&E's property.

After PG&E's rejection in 2016, the District initiated action to acquire PG&E's local electric grid through exercise of SSJID's eminent domain powers. PG&E has continued to pursue aggressive legal tactics to block the will of local communities who strongly support SSJID's effort.

"Our offer creates a path forward between SSJID and PG&E, provides capital to support PG&E and help it fund payment of creditors and wildfire claims in the bankruptcy, and advances SSJID's decades-long project," said Peter Rietkerk, SSJID's general manager. "We look forward to the opportunity to negotiate in good faith with PG&E, and work with other claimants involved in the bankruptcy case."

Since 2004, SSJID has sought to provide safe and reliable retail electric service in a transparent, responsive, and accountable manner — at a 15 percent cost savings over PG&E — to the approximately 40,000 electrical customers in and around the communities of Manteca, Ripon and Escalon. Recently, these communities renewed their support for SSJID's project in a joint letter to Gov. Gavin Newsom.

## Irrigation season scheduled to end October 24th

The harvest is well under way and so is the change of season as summer heat begins to moderate. With these changes comes the end of our 2019 irrigation season. In September, the SSJID Board of Directors decided to end the irrigation season on Oct. 24. Water will be available until 5 p.m. that day. There is always a slight possibility that this date will change due to unexpected weather or other changes in conditions, so everyone is advised to monitor the SSJID website at [www.ssjid.com](http://www.ssjid.com) for possible updates.

### Groundwater Sustainability Plan nearly complete. What's next?

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown in 2014. It requires groundwater basins in the state to be sustainable by 2040.

SSJID and the cities of Escalon and Ripon formed what is known as South San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Agency. The South San Joaquin GSA is one of 16 within the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Subbasin, encompassing about 770,000 acres in San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Calaveras counties.

All 16 GSAs are working to finalize and adopt a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) before the Jan. 31, 2020 deadline. The South San Joaquin GSA is scheduled to adopt the GSP on Nov. 20. Manteca opted to individually implement the GSP within its jurisdiction.

The Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin has set a target sustainability goal of recharging 78,000 acre-feet of water per year. There are multiple sources of surface water to develop groundwater recharge projects including the Stanislaus, Calaveras and Mokelumne rivers.

SSJID will continue to defend its historic water rights on the Stanislaus River. We believe the best defense against SGMA is to continue to serve the area's agricultural and urban customers with Stanislaus River water.

For more information about SSJID's involvement in SGMA and the South San Joaquin GSA, please contact *Brandon Nakagawa, SSJID Water Resources Coordinator, at (209) 249-4613 or [bnakagawa@ssjid.com](mailto:bnakagawa@ssjid.com).*

### Water Master Plan provides strategic road map

For the last 18 months, SSJID and Jacobs (an engineering consultant) have been working to develop a Water Master Plan (WMP) for the District. The completed WMP will act as a long-range strategic road map for SSJID and will be used to guide decisions and investments related to infrastructure, modernization and water resources for the next 20 to 30 years. Over the last several decades, many of our growers have transitioned from traditional flood irrigation to drip/micro irrigation, increasing the desire for more frequent access to water. Additionally, a large portion of the District's supply and distribution system, which was reconstructed in the 1950s and '60s, is nearing the end of its useful life and will need to be replaced. This WMP not only addresses those issues but will establish a new vision for the way water is distributed within the District and will ensure that our stakeholders can rely on that water for decades to come.

The WMP development team currently is working on Phase 2 of a three-phase process. Phase 1 (initial assessment) was completed at the end of 2018. Phase 2 consists of the technical work needed to produce the WMP document itself, and will also include stakeholder outreach to assure that the plan meets the long-term needs of our customers. Phase 3 will develop a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report that will be necessary to implement the capital improvement projects identified in the final WMP. Phase 2 is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2020 and Phase 3 in 2021.

Any questions or comments related to the WMP should be addressed to *Forrest Killingsworth, Engineering Dept. Manager, at (209) 249-4620 or [fkillingworth@ssjid.com](mailto:fkillingworth@ssjid.com).*

# Fall/Winter Construction and Maintenance Projects



Once the irrigation season ends and the canals run dry, SSJID crews switch into construction and maintenance mode. We have a fairly aggressive and unique set of construction and maintenance projects this year, including support work in the Stanislaus River basin for our Tri-Dam Project. Here is a quick snapshot of what we have planned to accomplish before the next irrigation season.

## Beardsley Afterbay Dam Maintenance Project

The Beardsley Reservoir Afterbay Dam is one of two jurisdictional redwood crib dams in California, originally constructed in 1957 as part of the Tri-Dam Project, a partnership project between SSJID and Oakdale Irrigation District that includes four reservoirs and hydroelectric projects in the Stanislaus River watershed. SSJID will be supporting our Tri-Dam Project by managing a maintenance project to reduce seepage around the dam's cutoff walls and replace some of the aging redwood timbers. The first phase of this two-year project started on Sept. 23 and is estimated to cost \$1,435,500. The second phase will be completed in fall 2020.

## Joint Supply Canal Rock Slope Maintenance

The Joint Supply Canal conveys water from our diversion at Goodwin Dam downstream to SSJID and OID. This project is intended to stabilize the loose rock on the steep hillside above the canal that threatens the safety of personnel and equipment as well as the operational reliability of the canal. SSJID has contracted with Drill Tech Shoring and Drilling, Inc. to complete the work in November and December. This project is expected to cost \$700,000.

## Float valves

Three float valves will be installed on the O/Oa Lateral and the Ob Lateral south of Escalon. The valves help control flows, prevent over pressurization and spills, and provide improved service.

## Cut-Down Pour-Over Walls

With the goals of extending the useful life of our irrigation pipelines and increasing customer service, SSJID will complete 12 projects to lower the walls inside our concrete distribution boxes just enough to provide pressure to allow for sprinkler irrigation, while adding flexibility for division managers. This flexibility improves service along laterals that serve both flood and sprinkler/drip customers.

## Pipeline Replacements and Canal Lining

**Lateral V:** 1,050 feet of 48-inch pipeline near Ripon along Melton Road east of Manteca Road

**Lateral Ja:** 400 feet of 36-inch pipeline near Escalon near Santa Fe Road and Orange Avenue

**Lateral T:** Resurfacing 1,800 feet of canal liner east of Jack Tone Road on the T- ditch

## Modernization with Automated Gates

We will install 10 automated Rubicon gates to improve flow regulation and measurement at the following locations (some of these locations will include multiple gates): Be/Bd box (Escalon); K/Ka box (Escalon); Qg (Manteca); Ob (Escalon); Oa1 at Main Distribution Canal (MDC) (Escalon); Oa3 (Escalon); and at Drop 13 in the MDC (Ripon), along with an automated trash rack.

## Billing reminder

As the 2019 water season comes to an end, we would like to remind everyone of our billing policy. As a convenience to our customers, we do not require payment for monthly volumetric fees until balances exceed \$10; however, all balances are due after your final water delivery of the season, even if the balance due is less than \$10. Customers with a balance due will not be eligible to receive water deliveries in 2020 until the balance is paid.

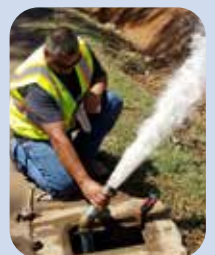
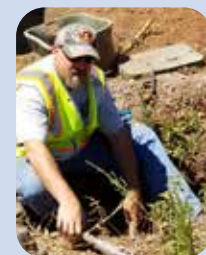


## SSJID sends 2 employees to help Paradise after fire

The Camp Fire, which burned for 17 days last November, was the most destructive in California history. More than 150,000 acres were scorched in Butte County. The town of Paradise was virtually wiped out. Tragically, 86 people lost their lives. Nearly 19,000 homes and structures destroyed.

The Paradise Irrigation District (PID) water system suffered severe damage. In May 2019, the California Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (CalWARN) issued a request to its members on behalf of PID. The district needed water service and meter technicians to assist in restoring service to properties affected by the fire. As a member of CalWARN, SSJID was happy to help.

On Aug. 11, 2019, SSJID sent employees **Ed Erisman** and **Matt Gonzales** from the Nick C. DeGroot Water Treatment Plant to Paradise. For five days, they helped to flush distribution lines, connect bypass hoses, install backflow prevention devices and locate customer service connections. The flushing brought fresh water into sections of the system that had not been used since most of the buildings were no longer standing. The bypass hoses and backflow prevention devices helped return water service to residents as they return to the town.



Erisman said the experience was at times overwhelming, given the scope of the damage, but that he was grateful for the opportunity to use his experience to assist the community of Paradise.