



NID

NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Waterways

A NEWSLETTER TO THE CUSTOMERS OF THE NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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State Lifts Drought Restrictions

Water Conservation is Here to Stay

The State Water Resources Control Board in mid-June lifted the mandatory water conservation measures that have been in place to save water during California's historic drought.

NID thanks you, our customers, for doing a tremendous job in saving water during the drought. We appreciate all you did to reduce water use and meet mandatory water conservation requirements under the state's emergency regulation of a year ago.

Thanks to last winter's improved rain and snowfall in Northern California and strong conservation statewide, specific state-mandated actions are being replaced with locally determined measures designed to maintain our water-wise
(Please See Conservation, P. 2)



Water Efficient Landscape



Members of the community are invited to stop by and visit the new water efficient landscape in front of the NID Business Center in Grass Valley where native and low water use plants are displayed and identified. Pictured are NID's Aurora Tipton with Adam Weiss and Greg Chapman of Weiss Landscaping. The landscape is open during normal business hours.

Water Project Aids Cascade Shores

The community of Cascade Shores at Scotts Flat Reservoir will be connected to NID's modern Elizabeth L. George Water Treatment Plant in a water project now in progress and scheduled for completion later this year.

The work includes more than three miles of 12-inch transmission line running from Banner Mountain. It is designed to improve water quality and reliability for NID's 400 customers in Cascade Shores. It includes fire hydrants and is sized for future expansion of the treated water system. The new connection will allow the district to abandon the old and undersized water treatment plant that dates to the original development of Cascade Shores. It will also reduce the small community's dependence on the upstream South Yuba Canal.



Jackson Meadows Reservoir, June 24, 2016

NID Water System Rebounds From Drought

After four years of drought, NID's water storage system has returned to near normal levels. As of July 11, the district's 10 reservoirs held 246,300 acre-feet of water, which is 114 percent of average for the date and 93 percent of capacity.

The generous 2015/16 rainfall year ended June 30, with 79.92 inches of precipitation (Bowman Reservoir, elev. 5,650 ft.). This equals 116 percent of the 130-year average of 69.12 inches.

Conservation Encouraged Continued From P. 1

habits and ensure we have adequate supplies for an additional three years of drought.

The bottom line is that while NID no longer has a specific state-mandated conservation standard, the district encourages everyone to continue using water efficiently. It's a way a life in California.

If the drought of the last four years has taught us anything, it's that water is a precious resource, wasting it is foolish and there are many relatively easy ways to conserve water. As we move away from state-mandated extraordinary conservation, certain wasteful practices remain prohibited, including watering hardscapes or irrigating within 48 hours of precipitation. We ask you to keep these and other water saving practices in place since the next dry year may be right around the corner.

Again, we thank you for your heroic efforts and congratulate you for becoming the efficient water community you are today. Please visit www.nidwater.com or www.saveourwater.com for water saving tips. Keep saving! It is the wise - and indeed the California - thing to do.

www.nidwater.com
www.centennialreservoir.org

Newtown Canal Upgrade Under Way This Summer



An upgrade to a critical section of the Newtown Canal near Newtown and Champion Mine roads west of Nevada City is in progress this summer, with completion expected later this year.

NID has placed high priority on the upgrade because the Newtown Canal is the primary source of water to NID's Lake Wildwood Water Treatment Plant, which supplies customers in Lake Wildwood and Penn Valley.

The Newtown Canal project is designed to improve water quality and remove a significant bottleneck in the canal. About 1900 feet of the canal is being realigned through a pipe along a roadside easement.

The canal realignment is being completed by Hansen Brothers Enterprises, Inc. of Grass Valley under a \$1.3 million contract awarded May 25 by the NID Board of Directors.

Timing of the canal realignment has been coordinated with the County of Nevada, which is planning road improvements in the area. This will allow NID to save an estimated \$65,000 in pavement overlay costs.

NID Pursues Fish Passage On Auburn Ravine Creek

NID Directors on June 8 authorized engineering studies of two alternatives for modifications to the Hemphill Canal diversion point on Auburn Ravine Creek between Auburn and Lincoln. Fish movement is currently limited by a three-foot-tall seasonal diversion NID installs on the creek each spring to deliver water to customers in the greater Lincoln area.

The two alternatives identified for further study are a streamside sump structure and a costlier stream bank well system. Both options would eliminate the need for the seasonal diversion structure.

The engineering analyses will become part of NID's environmental studies and project permitting processes, which could take four or more years. Engineering Manager Gary King said NID has applied for grant funding for the project but has received no commitments.

Community Support

The board's decision was applauded by local community groups, including Friends of Auburn Ravine and Auburn Ravine Preservation Committee, who are working toward improving fish passage on the creek.

The Hemphill project could improve fish passage to an additional six miles of Auburn Ravine. It would be NID's second significant contribution to fish migration in Auburn Ravine. The district's \$1.2 million fish ladder below Highway 65 in Lincoln, completed in 2011, earned finalist honors in the statewide environmental awards program of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA).

One of the most colorful characters in NID history is the legendary “Mad Russian” of Texas Creek. The solitary but likeable emigrant loved his vodka and garlic, talked to the animals and even kept a pet skunk during 13 years as a ditchtender at the isolated mountain station.

Born in Russia, Walter Proscurin found his way to the Gold Country and held a few odd jobs before he hired on with NID in the early 1950s to work summers in the mountains, repairing canals and flumes.

Walter's unusual life in the high country was traced through interviews with NID retirees Jason Davis, Frank “Snowshoe Fritz” Plautz, Lee Droivold and Kent Pascoe.

A year-round employee was needed at Texas Creek, four miles southwest of Bowman Reservoir, and it was at the onset of the record-setting winter of 1952 when Walter began his career as a high country ditchtender.

“I remember him calling for help because there was so much snow pushing against his house. He thought the snow would push it into the creek,” said Davis, who used to pack supplies into NID's remote mountain stations.

Asked what he remembered most about the Russian, Davis laughed. “He used to take garlic with his vodka. You couldn't get within six miles of him.”

“He ate garlic like we eat bread,” added Plautz, who retired after 22 years as NID's Bowman laketender. “He was serious. He wasn't much for joking. But he was a good-hearted guy. He always wanted to do something for you.”

Frank's wife, Ramona, said Walter was very eccentric and may have gained his nickname of the Mad Russian because of the way he would wave a rifle and chase hunters out of the Texas Creek area.

A loner and naturalized U.S. citizen, Walter rarely talked about his

The Russian of Texas Creek

He Loved Vodka, Garlic, His Pet Skunk



background but Plautz said he once told him he was previously married and had a daughter.

“I used to go down and talk to him,” said Plautz. “And one year he came up and spent Christmas with us, but for the most part he kept to himself.”

Walter lived alone in a stone and wood cabin on the bank of the Bowman-Spaulding Canal near its crossing at Texas Creek. A foundation is all that remains of the cabin today.

Motorists traveling on Highway 20 in the 1950s and early 1960s could look far to the north and see a distant flicker of light from Walter's cabin. The light could be seen from the turnout on the highway just before the Washington turnoff.

The stout, blond-haired Russian, who stood about 5'10" and weighed 220 pounds, was responsible for keeping the water flowing through several miles of canals and old wooden flumes from Windy Point to the Clear Creek Tunnel.

He used a gas-powered generator to light his cabin and power his television set. The cabin was equipped with a telephone that was often inoperable and a short-wave radio.

Walter rarely went to town but when he did, it was quite an occasion. “All of the guys would be following him around,” said Davis. “He would buy everybody drinks.”

Pascoe also said the Russian was a big hit during his ventures into Nevada City. “He used to throw himself birthday parties at Eddie's (now the site of Fur Traders). One year, he must have spent \$600 or \$700 buying everybody drinks.”

During those long and lonely months in the mountains, Walter, whose cabin was located beside a major deer migration route, became a friend to the animals.

“He would feed the coyotes,” said Davis. “And I know he had a bear coming up there for a few years. He always kept a salt lick for the deer.” “He fed the birds, too,” added Ramona Plautz. “And he kept a pet skunk under his house.”

The Russian had a passion for mail-order goods, including all kinds of guns, but according to his co-workers, he gave away nearly everything he ever owned.

When the Texas Creek station was closed in the mid-sixties, Walter spent his last two years of NID employment as a member of the maintenance crew in Grass Valley, but he was never quite at home in civilization.

Walter Proscurin's body was found on Mar. 24, 1968, a few years after his retirement, in Cabin No. 2 at Glenbrook near Grass Valley. The tiny cabin was one of many at the site where the Safeway store now stands.

The 63-year-old Russian, whose cause of death was listed as heart problems and pneumonia, died alone, much the same as he had lived. He is buried in the Pine Grove Cemetery in Nevada City.

(NOTE: This story first appeared in the Fall 1985 edition of NID WaterWays)



HR Manager Joins District
 NID welcomes **Jana Kolakowski**, GPHR, who joined the district in May as Human Resources Manager. A resident of Auburn, Kolakowski is a graduate of San Francisco State University and is certified as a Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR).

Night Shift at Brunswick NID maintenance crews worked the graveyard shift through most of June to replace several service lines near Nevada City Highway and Brunswick Road. The night work, needed because of high

traffic volumes in the area, was completed prior to an asphalt overlay project planned later in the summer by the City of Grass Valley.

Financing for Water Connections Recent amendments to NID's rules and regulations allow customers to finance up to \$20,000 (Up from \$7,000) for water system connections. The payback period was increased from five to 10 years. Officials said the adjustment might ease the financial burdens of connecting to the public water system.

Award-Winning Pump Station NID's recently completed Siphon Lane Pump Station on the DS Canal above Nevada City has earned a Project of the Year Award from the American Public Works Association, Sacramento Chapter. The station is positioned to alleviate any emergency outages that could occur on the upstream South Yuba Canal. It gives NID the ability to pump water uphill to the Cascade Canal or across the Deer Creek canyon to the Snow Mountain Canal.

Penn Valley-Lake Wildwood Studies The NID Board of Directors in July awarded a contract to HDR Engineering, Inc. for engineering analyses of potential improvements to the Lake Wildwood-Penn Valley treated water system. The areas are now served by the Lake Wildwood Water Treatment Plant, which is nearing its design capacity. The studies will include options for improving the treatment plant and will also analyze the potential for connecting the system to larger treated water systems that supply the greater Grass Valley-Nevada City area. The studies are expected to be complete by the end of the year.

Grant for Fire Safety at Scotts Flat Reservoir

NID has been awarded a state grant of \$250,700 for a fuel reduction program to improve fire safety on NID land at Scotts Flat Reservoir.

The award, announced June 2 by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, is part of an overall \$3.2 million in funding from Prop. 1 (*The Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014*) for projects in 10 Sierra counties. The NID award is the only Nevada County project to be funded.

NID Watershed Resource Planner Neysa King said the grant will fund the third phase of an ongoing project to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and to further regional efforts to construct a shaded fuels break around the reservoir.

The district will partner with the California Conservation Corps to remove excess trees, brush and sprouting hardwoods on 82 acres of NID land on the southern side of Scotts Flat Reservoir, west of Cascade Shores.

How to Contact Your Elected Directors

DIVISION I - Nevada City Area
 Nancy Weber, (530) 265-0424
 Board President, 2016

DIVISION II - Grass Valley-Chicago Park
 John Drew, (530) 272-5257

DIVISION III - Lake of the Pines-Alta Sierra
 Scott Miller, M.D., (530) 268-8778

DIVISION IV - Lincoln-North Auburn
 William Morebeck, (916) 645-8650

DIVISION V - Penn Valley-Lake Wildwood
 Nick Wilcox, (530) 432-2171
 Board Vice President, 2016



NID's QR Code

Scan this QR Code with your smart phone for direct access to the NID website.

<http://www.nidwater.com>



Obituary Jim Bachman 1937-2016

NID recognizes and applauds the public service of former Division IV Director Jim Bachman of Lincoln, who died May 22 at age 78.

Mr. Bachman was a rancher and retired construction manager who was appointed to the NID board in 2009 and elected to a four-year term in 2012. He served as NID board president in 2013. He resigned from the board in June 2015 for health reasons.

Mr. Bachman also served as president of both the Placer County Farm Bureau and Placer Farm Supply. He was a dedicated member of the Mt. Pleasant Hall Committee.

Services were held June 1 at Mt. Pleasant Hall. Memorial contributions to the Placer Land Trust are preferred by the family.